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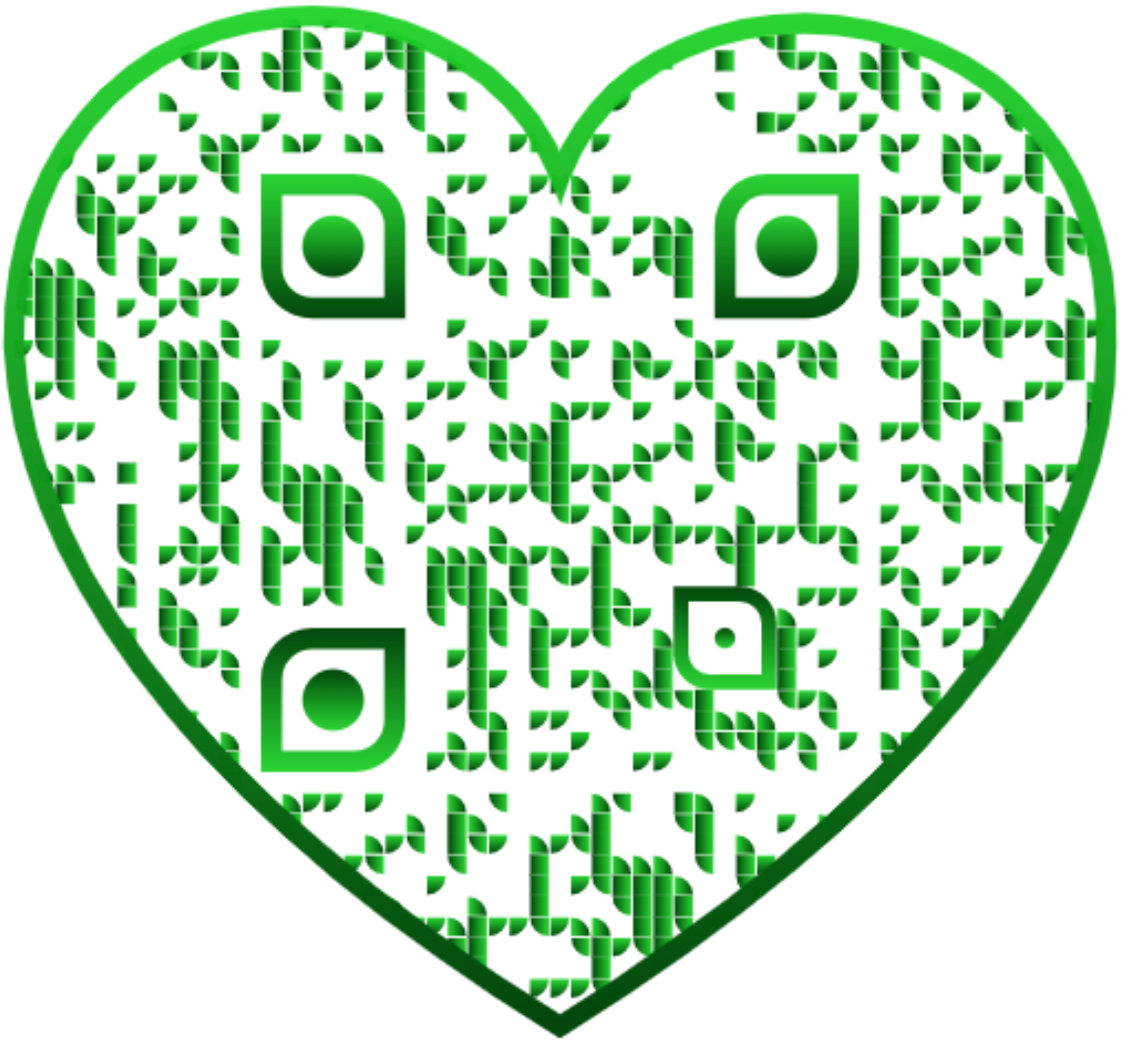
"THE POINT IS TO BE TRUE TO YOURSELF..."

KEITH FLINT

1969 - 2019

PLUS BEARTOOTH • DEVIN TOWNSEND • VEIN • HOLDING ABSENCE • WHILE SHE SLEEPS **& MORE**



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WELCOME

ISSUE K!1764
MARCH 16, 2019

These kinds of issues never get easier to make.

To echo the words of Mörat – Kerrang! writer and friend to The Prodigy since he fought tooth and nail to get the magazine to feature the band back in 1995 – we're all so very tired of working on obituaries. Recent years have seen the world lose far too many, far too young. At 49 years of age, Keith Flint and his band had many more shows to play and many more records to make. To lose him so young is nothing short of a tragedy on a disheartening multitude of levels. The mental health crisis within the music world is something that the industry as a whole can no longer turn a blind eye to.

Our tribute to Keith begins on page 24; we sincerely hope we have done him proud. We will never see another of his like again – a musical pioneer, a true original, the very definition of a one-of-a-kind. Our thoughts go out to Keith's family, bandmates and friends.

SAM COARE, EDITOR

KEITH FLINT A LIFE LIVED TO ITS FULLEST, AND LOST ALL TOO SOON. WE PAY TRIBUTE TO A GROUNDBREAKING ICON OF ROCK

GN'R! TOOL! RAMMSTEIN! WILL 2019 SEE SOME ABSOLUTE MONSTER COMEBACKS?

DEVIN TOWNSEND THE CURIOUS TOILET HABITS OF A ROCK'N'ROLL MISFIT

SOUNDGARDEN THE BIRTH OF SUPERUNKNOWN, AND THE DEMISE OF GRUNGE

HOLDING ABSENCE CAN THE WELSH POST-HARDCORE HOPEFULS LIVE UP TO THE HYPE?

WHILE SHE SLEEPS CAUSING STRUCTURAL DAMAGE TO THE UK'S VENUES SINCE 2006

COVER PHOTO: DAVID ELLIS

FACT! ONE NIGHT WHILE RECORDING QOTSA'S VILLAINS, PRODUCER MARK RONSON HAD TO THROW A PISSED DAVE GROHL OUT OF THE STUDIO TO STOP HIM DISTRACTING JOSH HOMME

PHOTO: PHOEBE FOX

UP CLOSE

IN THE SWIM

SWMRS hit the road for brilliant UK and Euro tour

It's hard to imagine how things could possibly be going any better for SWMRS right now. Last week, the punks not only announced that they'd be supporting rock titans Muse next month in the U.S., they also confirmed a return to Reading & Leeds in August. All of this while touring their excellent new record – the 4K-rated Berkeley's On Fire – around Europe and the UK. Basically: don't make assumptions based on the fact that frontman Cole Becker is having a mid-gig sit-down here at the Chapeau Rouge in Prague, because the boys have been *very* busy indeed. *K!*

Duff spotted a new Guns N' Roses album in the distance. We hope…

THE BIG STORY

METAL'S MOST WANTED...

Following last week's colossal SLIPKNOT news and album update, we went in search of information about the rest of metal's biggest bands. Step forward, GUNS N' ROSES, TOOL, RAMMSTEIN and more!

As they so often do, Slipknot are leading the charge in metal's most elite leagues this year. In the first *really bloody massive* announcement of 2019 so far, the Iowa titans confirmed last week that as-yet-untitled album number six would be arriving on August 9 via Roadrunner Records, just two months after their highly-anticipated June headline slot at Download Festival.

Not only that, but percussionist Shawn 'Clown' Crahan also proudly revealed to Kerrang! that the follow-up to 2014's .5: The Gray Chapter – which is on the "express checkout" in the studio right now – is going to be like "discovering Slipknot all over again". "You got a certain sort of war in '98," he teased of their explosive beginnings, "and now you're going to get another war in 2019." Of course, this follows frontman Corey Taylor's prior comments in the lead-up to the big reveal about the 'Knot's new full-length being "Iowa-levels of heavy", as well as calling it both "evil" and "ridiculous" to The Des Moines Register.

Having already heard lead single All Out Life – released last Halloween – it's safe to say the pair's bold claims are being borne out by the music. "As always, we're completely in control, and we have been for a while now, as you've seen with All Out Life and all the things we have going on," Clown nods. "This is the first time in my career where we've made everything artistic, everything music, everything *Slipknot* have the priority over anybody or anything."

This all got us thinking about some of the other most wanted metal albums of 2019, and what progress had been made since our New Noise issue (K!1754) predictions in January. Who's going to follow in Slipknot's footsteps and confirm a new record for us? Or even just a nice slice of fresh music? Well, let's see...

GUNS N' ROSES

While the members of Guns N' Roses are off creating noise and hitting the road with other projects, it hasn't stopped them each individually discussing the prospect of a new GN'R record this year – in spite of their otherwise hectic schedules.

According to bassist Duff McKagan – who has just released a brand new single, Tenderness, from his upcoming solo album – Guns N' Roses frontman Axl Rose has "some magnificent stuff" that he's been working on lately. "I'm excited about the possibilities with that, of course," the bassist said on Eddie Trunk's radio show, while also discussing the hard rock legends' approach to creating: "The fun part and the cool part about Guns N' Roses is we don't really talk about it, and what happens next just happens. It's never been that band where there's a direct schedule of how we do things."

> **"I'VE HEARD SOME MAGNIFICENT STUFF THAT AXL HAS!"**
> DUFF McKAGAN

Duff's words echo those of legendary guitarist Slash, who also confirmed recently that a new record is in the works.

Speaking to TVK's Rock City, the shredder said last August that Axl had "a ton of shit that he recorded lately". With a full-on year of touring (including a stop at Download Festival in June) alongside Myles Kennedy And The Conspirators, though, it's hard to imagine how Slash will have any free time to hit the studio – but we can dream...

TOOL

It wouldn't be Tool if fans weren't constantly being sent perplexing mixed messages – and we've already had a ton of 'em this year. January and February was even more confusing than usual, with drummer Danny Carey revealing at a NAMM convention signing that the follow-up to 2006's 10,000 Days would be released in April ("At least, that's the plan..."). Frontman Maynard James Keenan then responded to a fan on Twitter asking if there was any truth to Danny's statement, only to be met with a blunt, "No." Huh.

This was all a bit confusing since the month before Maynard had announced that, actually, his vocals for album number five had been finished "months ago" – before his European tour in December with A Perfect Circle. And then, in *another* reversal, four days after his 'No' tweet he announced vaguely that a "ballpark guess" for the record's release date would be "somewhere between mid-May and mid-July". In this same Twitter update Maynard also gave fans a helpful insight into just how much goes into the creation of an album – at least in Tool's world: "Update: midway through mixing. Most likely be a few

PHOTO: PAUL HARRIES

Chino Moreno: "We're getting into experimental sort of modes..."

recalls. Then some arguing. Then mastering, artwork, video, special packaging, etc."

Interestingly, then, it looks like there is a strong possibility of hearing new music very soon – especially given that Tool's first show of the year happens on May 5, in Jacksonville, Florida. Not only that, but the band headed to Portland, Maine last week to begin mastering new music with engineer Bob Ludwig (who also worked on 10,000 Days) alongside producer/engineer Joe Barresi – as Kerrang! went to print, the group confirmed this by posting a photo from the studio on Facebook.

DEFTONES

Believe it or not, we're actually going to hear music from Chino Moreno *next month*. Not under the banner of Deftones, however; the frontman has scored a film-length episode from Hulu's Into The Dark horror anthology. Called I'm Just Fucking With You, it's an instalment that "tells the story of a man and his sister on the way to a family wedding, who endure a night of increasingly frightening practical jokes during a one-night stay at a secluded motel". This is a mov(i)e that will see the multitalented musician join the likes of Trent Reznor, Marilyn Manson and Mike Patton in the soundtracking pantheon. Yep, can't wait to hear more...

In *actual* Deftones album news, though, details on the follow-up to 2016's Gore are less easy to come by. With the alt-metal icons sneakily teasing pictures from their Sacramento studio space on Instagram with very little information to accompany it, all we can really do is speculate at this point.

What we *can* safely assume is that there will be a whole lot of experimentation from their ninth record – and it will result in music that comes purely from the band's own tastes.

"Where we are in our writing process right now, it's really difficult for me to put a single look on what we're doing," Chino told us in last week's issue (K!1763) as part of our career-spanning interview with the musician. "It's morphing. Every day that we get together and write, we're definitely getting into experimental modes, which is my funnest mode that we get into."

Chino also revealed that the group are "just trying completely different ways of doing things". "That's what keeps it fun for us for the most part, not really knowing what's going to become of this, what type of record we're making," he said. "Just letting it kind of happen. It's been good on that level. That's the best way I can describe where we're at."

RAMMSTEIN

Things are, thankfully, more concrete on the Rammstein front these days – for a change. Another band who have made us all wait *forever* for new music (their last studio album, Liebe ist für alle da, came out in 2009), the German industrial titans seem to be on course to release their seventh LP next month. "We flew to Los Angeles to mix the record with Rich Costey, who has worked with Muse and a bunch of other big bands," guitarist Richard Z. Kruspe told Kerrang! recently. "It looks like we will have five music videos coming out this time, too. I feel really happy with the album, although a few things might change."

Speaking of music videos, Rammstein have been revealing plenty of images from various recent shoots, hinting at "no fire, but nuns!" in one teaser, and looking like a pretty slick, old-fashioned gang in another. Teaming up with director Jonas Åkerlund once more – who joined forces with the six-piece for Mein Land's surf-tastic video, as well as the controversial and wildly pornographic Pussy – it seems a pretty safe bet that the visuals that will accompany Rammstein's new music will be just as out-there as, well, the music itself.

For more German genius, Richard also recently revealed in an interview with Metal Wani that Rammstein once stole a... *cow*. "There was a very intense time that we had together – almost starving," he explained. "I had this new car, and I had to wait for, like, four people – and we were actually going for chicken. But the problem was that the chicken farm took the chicken out for slaughter the day before, so there were no chicken anymore. We had to find something else. I remember I had this new Volkswagen and all of a sudden the trunk would go off and a cow was in my car."

So, y'know, there's a nice image to ponder over while we all wait until April.

MACHINE HEAD

Wasting no time following their end-of-an-era gig on November 24, which saw them part ways with guitarist Phil Demmel and drummer Dave McClain, Machine Head are already back in the studio.

"Where we at?" frontman Robb Flynn posted from the studio in his home of Oakland on his social media on February 15, revealing his whereabouts. "We're in the studio! We've got the guitar, layin' down some tracks... some new heaviness..."

Quite who else is actually partaking in this "new heaviness" is yet to be confirmed, with only bassist Jared MacEachern working alongside Robb for now – that is, unless the frontman has secretly recruited new members.

With recently-departed guitarist Phil admitting that he thought Machine Head had just become "a Robb Flynn solo" project following 2018's dividing Catharsis album, the frontman himself ultimately agreed.

"I have held on too tight to the reins of this band and I have suffocated those guys," he said. "I've got a lot of drive, but I've got a lot of anger and rage, and that drive of mine has alienated folks and the band."

Whatever happens, then, it's on Robb... K!

STAY TUNED TO KERRANG.COM FOR MORE NEWS ON ALL THE BIGGEST ALBUMS – METAL OR OTHERWISE – OF THE YEAR

GOD DAMN

Not all of metal's biggest bands have plans this year, unfortunately...

While we're all understandably super excited about all the action from some of metal's biggest bands, not everyone will be getting involved in what is going to be a massive year for music. Among those names are Huntington Beach titans **AVENGED SEVENFOLD**, who seemingly won't be returning until 2020. Radio host Lou Brutus announced last week that he had been in communication with A7X guitarist Zacky Vengeance, and revealed the following: "Was just texting with Zacky Vengeance and asked him about Avenged Sevenfold touring. He told me, 'I don't think we will be doing any touring this year. Got some new babies on the way and are starting to get really focused on new material. I never deal in absolutes, but right now it's leaning heavily towards 2020.'" Given frontman M. Shadows' vocal recovery after a "terrible viral infection", this isn't hugely surprising. But hey, we're greedy people, and we would have really liked even more new music this year. What of it?

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TALKING LOUD

WE MUST KEEP TALKING ABOUT SUICIDE

With the death of KEITH FLINT on everyone's minds, BEARTOOTH's CALEB SHOMO says the only way out of the darkness is to reach out...

"The statistics on suicide are pretty shocking. It seems like there has been a lot of progress made, though, which is truly awesome. Like, I have a buddy who runs a thing called Hope For The Day – he has a coffee shop where the proceeds all go to mental health organisations, and it's very much about speaking out and being open about the things that we're going through in our heads.

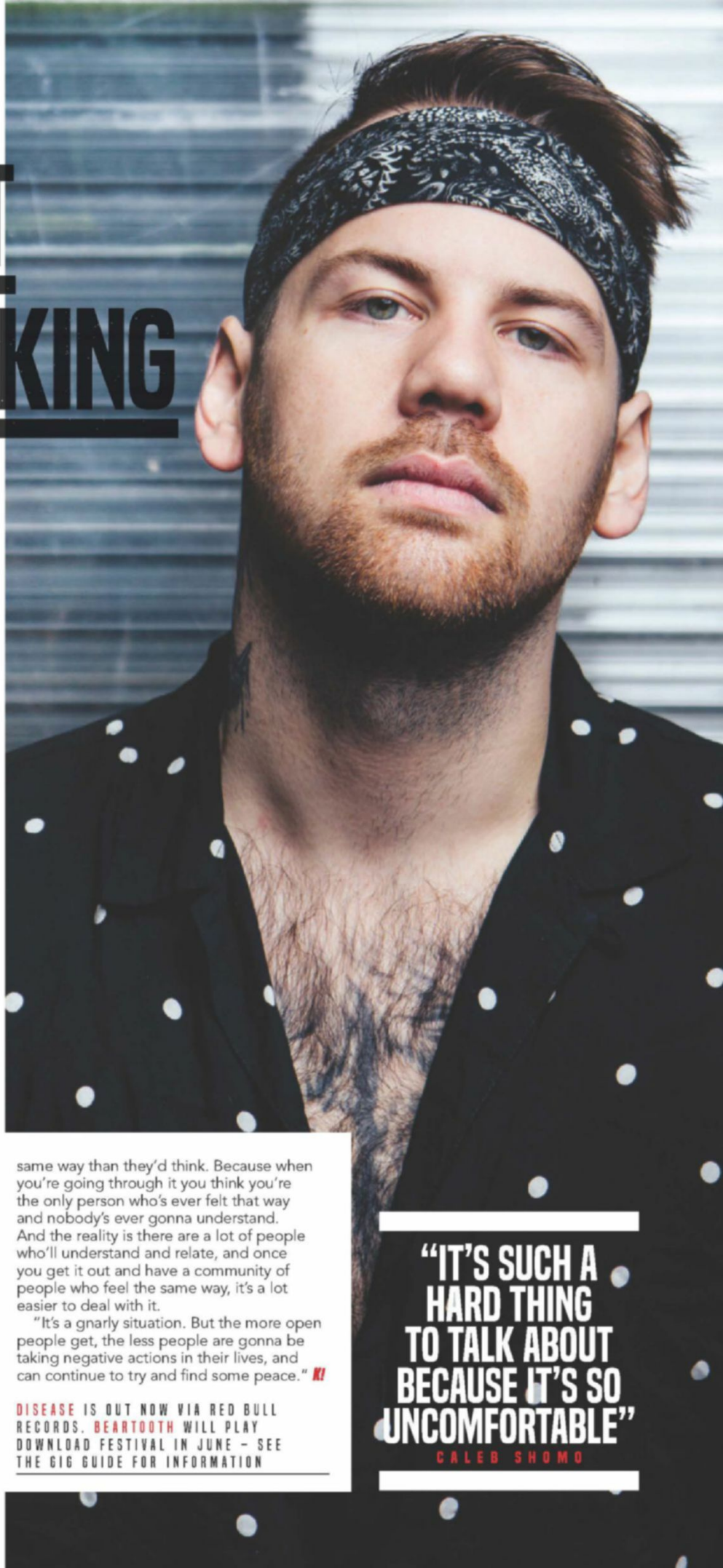
"The reality is, it's such a hard thing to talk about because it's so uncomfortable, and it's not a usual thing to wanna bring up. Really, it's the stigma that is the issue [with suicide], that everybody just thinks you're fucking nuts if you're feeling that way, and I've been there. It's such a difficult thing to talk about.

"I just hope people can continue to make that progress, and find ways to talk about it. The way to change things is to do more stuff like Hope For The Day is doing – they're *extremely* open about it with everything they do, and their whole stance on life is just being open and having safe places to talk, and people to talk to.

"For me, personally, the hardest thing was just finding anybody to open up to about what you're feeling. And as things continue, the stigma, where being suicidal means you're just fucking nuts, will get buried. Then people can realise that so many more people feel that same way than they'd think. Because when you're going through it you think you're the only person who's ever felt that way and nobody's ever gonna understand. And the reality is there are a lot of people who'll understand and relate, and once you get it out and have a community of people who feel the same way, it's a lot easier to deal with it.

"It's a gnarly situation. But the more open people get, the less people are gonna be taking negative actions in their lives, and can continue to try and find some peace." **K!**

DISEASE IS OUT NOW VIA RED BULL RECORDS. BEARTOOTH WILL PLAY DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL IN JUNE – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFORMATION



"IT'S SUCH A HARD THING TO TALK ABOUT BECAUSE IT'S SO UNCOMFORTABLE"

CALEB SHOMO

WORDS: JENNIFER J. WALKER PHOTO: ANDY FORD

INSTANT EXPERT

YEAR HERO

As NINE INCH NAILS get set to collaborate with Captain Marvel, these are our fave Marvel and rock team-ups...

PHOTO: GETTY

1 NINE INCH NAILS AND CAPTAIN MARVEL

We absolutely lost our minds when we saw Carol Danvers (played by Brie Larson) sporting an old-school Nine Inch Nails tee in the official trailer for Captain Marvel. And now, following the film's release on Friday, the comic book giants have unveiled a collaborative T-shirt with the band (pictured above). Buy one and show off both your inner nerd *and* your excellent taste in music.

2 BLACK SABBATH AND IRON MAN

Just like Carol in Captain Marvel, Robert Downey Jr.'s Tony Stark – aka Iron Man, aka The Absolute Coolest Superhero Ever – has some badass band merch, most notably a pretty special Black Sabbath Never Say Die 1978 tour shirt (which you can see in the first Avengers movie). "Not bad, huh?" Robert told The Collider in 2012. Yeah, you could say that...

3 AC/DC AND – AGAIN – IRON MAN

Yep, more proof that Iron Man is the best: hard rock legends AC/DC offered up their services and impeccable music to the entire Iron Man 2 soundtrack, as well as splicing footage of the film itself with a colossal live performance for Shoot To Thrill's exhilarating video. All of this despite technically having rival comic brand 'DC' in their name. Little joke, there.

4 PANIC! AT THE DISCO AND VENOM

This isn't strictly *official* – at least, as far as we can tell – but there's a reference to Brendon Urie and co in last year's Spider-Man spin-off, Venom. Where? Well, buried in the tracklist for the soundtrack, there's a song called Panic At The *Bistro*. It's missing Panic!'s exclamation mark, but we'll let 'em off, because we're nice like that.

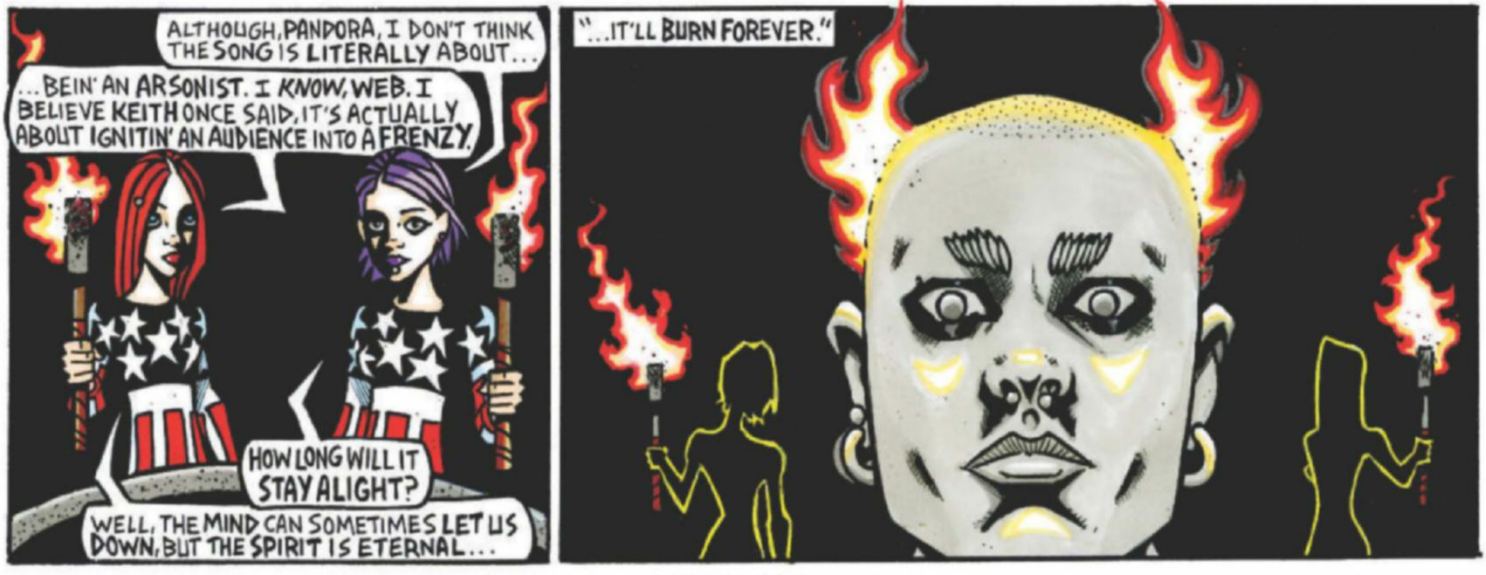
5 ENTOMBED AND WOLVERINE

Going one better than simply having a song on a Marvel soundtrack, Sweden's Entombed actually had clawed superhero Wolverine on an alternative cover of their 1993 Wolverine Blues album – although, apparently it was not a move approved by the band, instead done by their record label, Earache. Either way, it looked suitably, er, *marvellous*.

6 METALLICA AND THE PUNISHER

Netflix's brilliant The Punisher series may have been sadly cancelled recently, but we'll never forget the use of music in its trailers – from Metallica's One to Alice In Chains' Would. Papa Het and the gang even approved, too, tweeting about the first series' "killer soundtrack" when the trailer originally dropped. We wholeheartedly agree.

PANDORA BY RAY ZELL



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ACCESS ALL AREAS

LIVING THE DREAM

Ever fancied touring with THE XCERTS? Their new video for YOU MEAN EVERYTHING shows just what it's like...

Ahead of the release of their new Wildheart Dreaming EP later this month, The Xcerts have unveiled a new video for latest single You Mean Everything – and it's truly uplifting.

Given that the trio have spent pretty much all of the past year on the road doing their biggest headline shows to date, as well as supporting everyone from Biffy Clyro to the Goo Goo Dolls, it's no wonder the clip is heavy on the live footage. Taken from Reading Festival and their tour supporting You Me At Six in particular, it's the perfect showcase of just how glorious The Xcerts' gigs have become.

"The video was put together by our close friend Thomas Brooker, who has spent the past year and a half with us on the road during the entire Hold On To Your Heart campaign," explains frontman Murray Macleod. "I guess it's kind of a romantic, rock'n'roll family home video."

With even more touring planned for the rest of this year, we're very much looking forward to the sequel. ***K!***

WILDHEART DREAMING IS OUT ON MARCH 22 VIA RAYGUN RECORDS. THE XCERTS TOUR THE UK FROM THIS MONTH UNTIL MAY – SEE THE GIG GUIDE

PHOTOS: THOMAS BROOKER

NEW NOISE

MINORS

Surname-free hardcore-sludge crew brewing dark music for dark times...

The Canadian bus service really needed to upgrade their fleet

Often, the most compellingly heavy music is made in the shadows, by people standing on the outside and observing a situation for what it truly is.

For Canadian force Minors, their border hometown of Windsor, Ontario, which sits across the Detroit River from the United States, offered the perfect breeding ground for their hardcore-sludge concoction. "People here think you're either gonna live and die working in a factory or you *have* to get out," explains guitarist Nick, who ironically moved there from Eastbourne. Drummer Sean adds, "It's almost segregated from everything else because touring bands will skip Windsor. It can be rough, but I think the scene here is really concentrated because of that environment."

It is also part of the reason Nick and Sean, who formed the band in 2012, prefer to keep their surnames a secret. "It's cheaper to fuel up your van in the States," grins Nick, "and we don't want border control to Google us, listen to the band and then turn us back around."

Paranoid? Well, listen to their new album, Abject Bodies, and you'll hear what he means. It's a thoroughly disturbing blend of frenzied riffs and nihilistic sentiments that would give The Man cause for concern.

> **"WE ALL PUT OUR AGGRESSION INTO THE BAND"**
> SEAN, MINORS

"The general idea is that what's inside us is far more repulsive when it's outside your body," says Nick of the album's dominating theme. "It's so heavy and nasty that when we listen back to it we're like, 'Man, these are such horrible pieces of music!'"

The record sounds like an exorcism, as Minors rip out their innermost frustrations and hold them up to the light. Some songs seethe with anger over a friend being grievously injured in a hit-and-run, while Erode addresses the suffering of Sean's brother-in-law through stage four cancer. "Seeing him go through that really frustrated me, and my only outlet was to drum ridiculously hard and fast," he says. "We all have this hidden aggression that we put in the band and that's how we deal with those situations."

It's a way of thinking that sums Minors up perfectly. "You hear news about the shit people are going through on a daily basis and you can't help but be weighed down if you have any conscience," asserts Sean. "People feel like they have no control over anything. I guess the only control we have is to write pissed-off music about it." **KI**

MINORS' ALBUM ABJECT BODIES IS OUT NOW VIA HOLY ROAR

GET TO KNOW

Your guide to MINORS...

THEY ARE: Canadian quartet fusing the murkiest sludge and hardcore with frustration and the bleakest of worldviews.
HEAR: The cathartic fury of the band's excellent new album Abject Bodies.
SEE: An unsettling vision of sleep paralysis in the Flesh Prison video.
MORE INFO: Facebook.com/weareminors

WORDS: JAMES MACKINNON

NOW HEAR THIS

JUSTINE JONES from EMPLOYED TO SERVE on the new music you need to hear right now...

Last month was full of great shows. I went to see Narrow Head, Higher Power and Vein at the New Cross Inn in London, and it was awesome.

You've probably heard loads about the other two, but **Narrow Head** are a band from the U.S. who released their album Satisfaction in 2016. They have a strong Deftones, Big Bite and Superheaven vibe about them. They were hinting towards a new album during their set, so make sure you keep an eye out for it, and check out their discography while you're at it.

I also went to Downsurge Festival last month as well. **Watchcries** were early on in the day and set the tone for the rest of the show with their own brand of hardcore crust. They're kind of like the black metal band Wiegedood, but with a hardcore edge similar to bands like Cult Leader. Also on the bill were **Renounced**, who played a cover of Lamb Of God's Black Label, along with tracks off their last album, Theories Of Despair. The band have just finished recording their new record, so make sure you do your listening homework and check out all of their older stuff before it drops.

I was also lucky enough to catch **Rough Hands** opening for Drug Church and Single Mothers when they levelled the Boston Music Rooms in London. If you missed it, they released a new EP late last year called Moral Terror on Venn Records, and they're one of the UK's finest hardcore bands. Check them out if you want to hear something that pushes the envelope.

One of the guys I work with in the Holy Roar office put the **Geld** LP Perfect Texture on to a Spotify playlist, and I've been listening to it ever since. The album cover is this pretty-looking abstract painting, but the music's anything but nice. Trashy acid-fuzz is probably the best way to describe this band, with punishing D-beats and out-of-this-world guitar solos. It's the soundtrack of a trip gone horribly wrong.

On the other end of the spectrum, I've been listening to **Snail Mail**'s Lush. It's the solo work of singer-songwriter Lindsey Jordan, who's developed as a songwriter in leaps and bounds since her last EP, Habit. The songs couldn't be less sonically offensive, which is perfect if you need something other than riffs – they're indie-rock with great hooks and moody lyrics about life as an awkward twentysomething. Fans of Fiona Apple, Julien Baker and Phoebe Bridgers will love this. It reminds me of when I heard Paramore's All We Know Is Falling album for the first time.

On a final note, if you're stuck for plans this summer, the very awesome ArcTanGent festival have just announced a wave of new bands, and it's unmissable. They've managed to include a lot of my column shout outs, including LLNN, Palm Reader and A.A.Williams! I've personally been going there for the past three years, and it's an annual habit everyone should develop. **K!**

EMPLOYED TO SERVE'S ALBUM ETERNAL FORWARD MOTION IS OUT ON MAY 10 VIA SPINEFARM. THE BAND TOUR THIS SPRING – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFORMATION

> **"ROUGH HANDS REALLY PUSH THE ENVELOPE..."**
> JUSTINE JONES

Rough Hands: hands in pockets, more like

Snail Mail: blazing a quiet-rock snail-trail

Watchcries: got the time, folks?

KERRANG! ROCK CHART

VENOM PRISON continue their bloody hold on the top spot for a second week

VENOM PRISON: furious

	ARTIST	TITLE	
1	VENOM PRISON	UTERINE INDUSTRIALISATION	↔
2	YONAKA	BAD COMPANY	↔
3	DREAM STATE	HAND IN HAND	NEW
4	EMPLOYED TO SERVE	FORCE FED	▲
5	WHILE SHE SLEEPS	THE GUILTY PARTY	▼
6	ANDY BLACK	WESTWOOD ROAD	▼
7	NEW FOUND GLORY	THE POWER OF LOVE	NEW
8	SCARLXRD	HEAD GXNE	NEW
9	SWMRS	APRIL IN HOUSTON	▼
10	MARK MORTON	CROSS OFF	▼
11	I PREVAIL	BREAKING DOWN	▼
12	FREE THROW	TODAY IS ESPECIALLY DELICIOUS	NEW
13	DEAFHEAVEN	BLACK BRICK	▲
14	THE DAMNED THINGS	CELLS	▼
15	DUFF MCKAGAN	TENDERNESS	▲
16	THE AMAZONS	MOTHER	▲
17	LOTUS EATER	MOTHER	NEW
18	DEATH BLOOMS	CROSSES	▼
19	ALEXISONFIRE	FAMILIAR DRUGS	▼
20	ENTERPRISE EARTH	SLEEP IS FOR THE DEAD	↔

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LIFE IS HEAVY

BIRTH. SCHOOL. ROCK. DEATH.

The stories behind the songs that helped transform BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE vocalist and guitarist MATT TUCK from a boy into a man...

THE FIRST SONG THAT I REMEMBER HEARING

WHATEVER YOU WANT
STATUS QUO (1979)

"There was always music playing in the house when I was a kid, but Status Quo were my dad's favourite band, as they were for a lot of fathers in the '80s. Of all the Quo songs I heard when I was young, Whatever You Want really sticks in my memory. I remember my dad putting the vinyl on and rocking out to it really clearly."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF BEING A TEENAGER

SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT
NIRVANA (1991)

"I started getting into music a lot more in my teenage years, and it was around the age of 13 when it became a big deal to me. I listened to loads of bands, but Nirvana's Nevermind stands out as a massively important record for me and my friends. Smells Like Teen Spirit was a huge part of my upbringing – I loved to jam that and Come As You Are with my band."

THE FIRST SONG THAT I LEARNED TO SING

ENTER SANDMAN
METALLICA (1991)

"James Hetfield was a huge influence on me, and Metallica were my biggest love when I was a teenager. Singing was never really part of the plan, because I was happy playing guitar, but I found myself in a situation where a group of us got together and started to jam songs, so I gave it a go. A lot of people struggle with playing guitar and singing at the same time, but I've always found it pretty easy."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF MY FIRST LOVE

HOT DOG
LIMP BIZKIT (2000)

"I was around 16 when I started to go on dates and have girlfriends. Hearing Limp Bizkit's Chocolate Starfish And The Hot Dog Flavored Water album takes me back to having my first car and picking my girlfriend up to go on drives, and I see that period of my life as the time I changed from a boy into a man. The era where Limp Bizkit and Korn dominated rock reminds me of those innocent moments, and of being in love for the first time."

THE FIRST BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE SONG I HEARD ON THE RADIO

ALL THESE THINGS I HATE (REVOLVE AROUND ME)
BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE (2005)

"This song got a lot of radio love when it first came out, and it got to something like 21 in the UK charts, which blew our minds. We'd had videos on TV before, but to hear our music for the first time on British radio was amazing. It was a similar feeling heading out to the States a year later and hearing Tears Don't Fall on specialist rock stations. I remember writing those songs in my friend's bedroom, so to then have them on the radio was a massive head-trip."

THE SONG THAT PICKS ME UP WHEN I'M DOWN

BLEED AMERICAN
JIMMY EAT WORLD (2001)

"That whole album [2001's Bleed American] is quite sombre and sensitive, but I can always rely on it to put a smile on my face. Jimmy Eat World are a great, feel-good band with a great catalogue, and they're also like a shoulder to cry on. There's nothing complicated or contrived about it. They just write fantastic songs, and they're a band who will always be there for you."

THE SONG I'D GO BACK AND CHANGE IF I COULD

SCREAM AIM FIRE
BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE (2007)

"That whole album could've been better in many ways. Partly because I needed to go to speech therapy and get a tonsillectomy, but we also tried too hard to show everyone what we were about as far as metal credibility goes, whereas we should've just gone down the path we wanted to. Those songs would've been better if we'd have done what we did on The Poison and written from the heart."

MY FAVOURITE SONG TO PLAY LIVE

NOT DEAD YET
BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE (2018)

"It's got an awesome, feel-good factor and it's garnered a magical response from fans. It's got a more anthemic vibe than anything we've done before, and hearing the chorus sung back is a beautiful thing. It's a freight train of a track."

THE SONG THAT I'M PROUDEST OF WRITING

TEARS DON'T FALL
BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE (2005)

"This is the obvious choice because it's been a fan favourite since it came out, and it catapulted us from London's Barfly to Wembley. I've written far better songs since, but in terms of what it's done for the band, it's the song I'm proudest of."

THE SONG I'D LIKE PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL

THUNDER ROAD
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN (1975)

"The story about growing up in a small town that's got nothing to offer you really rings true for me. It inspired me to get out and fight to make something of myself. Thunder Road is about escaping home, not because you hate it, but because the odds are stacked against you – I had that drive and ambition, too."

BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE'S LATEST ALBUM GRAVITY IS AVAILABLE NOW VIA SEARCH AND DESTROY. THE BAND TOUR THE UK AND PLAY SLAM DUNK IN MAY – SEE THE GIG GUIDE

WORDS: JAKE RICHARDSON PHOTO: ANDY FORD

"WE TRIED TOO HARD FOR METAL CREDIBILITY"

MATT TUCK

Matt wasn't happy that someone had stolen his sleeves

NO-ONE KNOWS...

"NECK DEEP CONVINCED ME THAT I ATE MEAT!"

You want cruel vegan pranks, pointless film trivia or dreams about being crushed by pipes? Step right up, KAYA TARSUS of BLOOD YOUTH...

I HATE SNAKES

"I have an Indiana Jones fear of snakes! They're just the worst things I've ever seen. I have a fear that if I'm around one it's gonna go in my nose or ear! When I was 16, my first ever girlfriend's family had a snake, and I hated it. So maybe it's a psychological thing, and I just relate snakes with being heartbroken as a teenager (*laughs*)."

I'M A CLEAN FREAK

"My apartment is *pristine*. I can't go to bed if there's washing up in the sink, or everything is untidy, and I'm one of those coaster people when people put cups on my table. I get a little bit triggered!"

I WANTED TO BE A FIREMAN

"I remember dressing up as both a policeman and a fireman when I was five, but I'm way too emotional to be a fireman. I know you have to 'leave the job outside', but I'd be writing songs and novels about it, and listening to The Smiths at night. It'd be intense..."

I'M A MASSIVE FILM NERD

"I'll be watching a film and I'll know every character's past history, what films they've been in, what their star sign is. If we're on tour watching a film, I'll be [dropping facts] and everyone will be like, 'Shut the fuck up!' I got it from my dad, because he's the same. He would tell me stuff and I'd find it so interesting, but now I'm doing it nobody finds it interesting (*laughs*)."

NECK DEEP ONCE PLAYED A MEAN PRANK ON ME

"I was on tour with them in Italy, and I was the most drunk I've ever been. I'm vegan, and the next day everybody convinced me that I ate a cheeseburger in McDonald's. For about a year I had this guilt that I ate a cheeseburger. Then, a few months ago, Neck Deep's tour manager text me and was like, 'By the way, you never ate a cheeseburger.' I was like, 'You motherfucker!'"

I WANT TO RELEASE A SELF-HELP BOOK

"That's what I'm kinda working on at the moment. One point I wrote the other day was I compared my love of drinking coffee to being in love, because the more coffee I drink, the more shit it makes me feel. And I feel like the more I delve into love, the more I'm open to feeling like shit. It's called Kind Of Sad, Kind Of Happy."

I HAVE A RECURRING ANXIETY DREAM

"I've had it since I was a child. It's me stood in a grassy field, I'm walking around, then all of a sudden there are pipes and metal that come out of the ground and wrap around me, and I can't breathe. It's terrifying and I feel so scared! I usually have it when I'm stressed, when we're writing or I'm going through a bad patch."

MY BIGGEST REGRET IS NOT BEING INTERESTED IN SCHOOL

"I'm like a sponge now, and I just want knowledge! But I didn't give a shit in school because I just wanted to be in a band (*laughs*). I didn't do well in my exams, but I passed. I feel like I could have definitely done better."

BLOOD YOUTH'S NEW ALBUM STARVE IS OUT NOW VIA RUDE RECORDS

WORDS: JENNYFER J. WALKER PHOTO: GOBINDER JHITTA

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COOL STUFF

MUST HAV£S

The only things you need to spend your money on this week...

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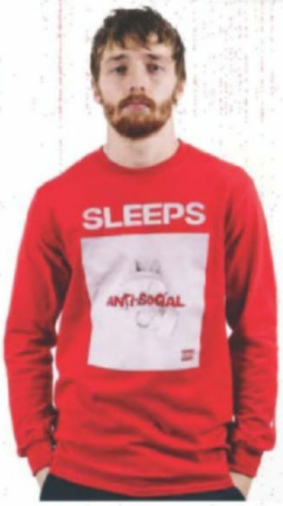
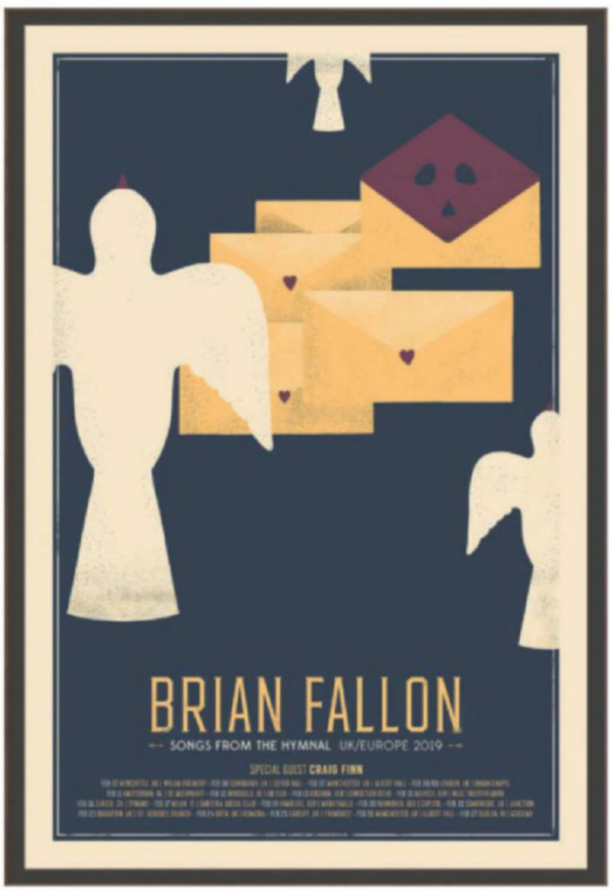


Yes, that is While She Sleeps guitarist Sean Long, but we promise you don't need to be in the band to wear this dope shirt.
£25 Whileshesleeps.com

Show your stuff a golden time by lugging it around in this Eastpak camo forest duffle bag.
£59.95 Urbanindustry.co.uk



Want to get the warmth of a Brian Fallon show into your home without resorting to kidnapping? Try this poster from artist Zum Heimathafen.
€35 (£30) Zumheimathafen.com

We may as well just give Venom Prison the 'most sinister band shirt of the year' award now, to be honest.
£15 Venomprison.com

You don't need to have graduated from nice hoodie college to know that this one from Brain Dead is a nice hoodie.
£185 Endclothing.com

You haven't really listened to FEVER 333 if you haven't listened to them while wearing their own ski mask, if you ask us.
£30 Shop.roadrunnerrecords.co.uk

This monochrome Tilt jacket from Cali streetwear heroes The Hundreds makes being waterproof look really good.
£135 Thehundreds.uk

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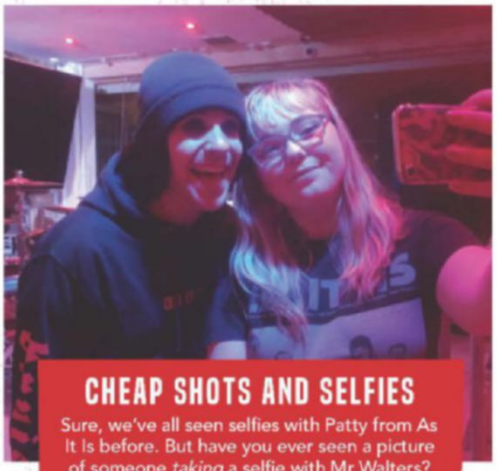
YOUR SCENE

Your pics, your art... your lives

WINNER!

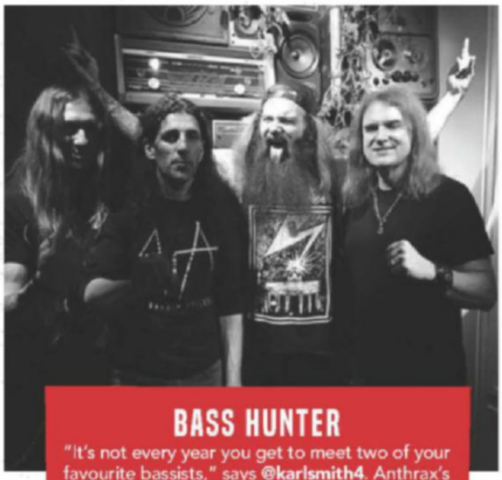
ART OF FIRE

If you ever miss the Andy Biersack of 10 years ago, then feast your eyes on **@Elianathebean**'s brilliant painting of the Black Veil Brides frontman. It's also this week's winner – so congratulations, Eliana, you've won a pair of tickets to the Bring Me The Horizon-curated day at All Points East. Get in touch at Feedback@kerrang.com to claim them.



CHEAP SHOTS AND SELFIES

Sure, we've all seen selfies with Patty from As It Is before. But have you ever seen a picture of someone *taking* a selfie with Mr Walters? Thankfully, **@xhollymuttonx** has you covered.



BASS HUNTER

"It's not every year you get to meet two of your favourite bassists," says **@karlsmith4**. Anthrax's Frank Bello and Megadeth's David Ellefson is a good haul, but next year we want *three* bassists.

MAN ON FIRE

"Selfie with Dan from Bury Tomorrow," says **@MadinaVickzstar**. "He's been a help with my mental health. He's an amazing bean." He's also a pro at ruining photos, it seems.

DRAW OR BE DRAWN

Fun fact: no matter where you're stood, the eyes of **@imnotokbecausemcr**'s picture of Ash Costello will follow you around the room (and look slightly annoyed about it).

LEARN TO FRY

While **@migrainejones** did show excellent pancake skills with his "Pancake Dave" on what he has dubbed "Shrove Foosday", he also seems concerningly low on chocolate spread.

NEXT WEEK

WIN A PAIR OF TICKETS TO SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL

Not to panic anyone, but it's only 10 weeks until Slam Dunk Festival. This year's event will take place in Leeds and Hatfield on May 25 and 26 respectively, and has a killer line-up that includes All Time Low, Neck Deep, Glassjaw and NOFX's Punk In Drublic stage. Don't stress if you haven't got your tickets yet, as we have a pair to give away! For your chance to win them, tweet us your best band selfies and artwork with #Kommunity, or email them to Feedback@kerrang.com!

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COVER STORY

ETERNAL FLAME

Firestarter. Rock star. Icon. Onstage, a maniac capable of striking fear into your folks. Offstage, a humble gentleman with time and a smile for everyone. Last week, the world lost THE PRODIGY's KEITH FLINT – destroyer of boundaries, and one of music's true originals. Kerrang! pays tribute to a man whose flame will forever burn brightly…

WORDS: NICK RUSKELL, MÖRAT **PORTAIT PHOTOS:** PAUL HARRIES

It was on March 28, 1996, that the world at large first encountered Keith Flint. As BBC1 chart show Top Of The Pops announced that The Prodigy's Firestarter had gone straight in at Number One and the video was beamed into millions of televisions across the country, it was hard to know what you were seeing. Though a known quantity as a dance band, the appearance of dancer and onstage hype-man Keith spitting lyrical venom into the camera over the song's furious beats was brave new world territory.

For some, it was too much. The sight of Keith's twin mohicans, facial piercings and unhinged dancing caused record numbers of complaints to the BBC, with parents accusing the video of traumatising their children. But musically, this broke the world: The Prodigy were at a stroke the most exciting, thrilling, forward-thinking musical petrol bomb on Earth. And with them emerged one of the most electric, bolshy, give-no-fucks frontmen to appear in a generation.

Tragically, on March 4, the world lost this great man, and The Prodigy's musical mastermind Liam Howlett, who had started the band with Keith in 1989, confirmed that "our brother Keith took his own life over the weekend." Questions of why and how this could happen to such a domineering, undefeatable colossus, who only two days earlier had taken part in a charity run and was down to perform at Glastonbury, will persist without answer. But what's certain about Keith Flint is that onstage or off, nobody who came into his orbit will ever forget him.

"THANK YOU FOR THE INSPIRATION, FRIENDSHIP AND MUSIC"
DAVE GROHL

Keith hadn't always been set for superstardom. Born in 1969 and moving from London to Braintree, Essex as a kid, he described his home life with his parents as difficult and frustrating. School wasn't much better, being dyslexic and with a rebellious streak often landing him in trouble, eventually getting expelled, aged 15. Always looking for places to fit in, he became interested in motorcycles and music. Fortuitously, during an after-party on a beach one night, he came across a lad DJing out of the back of a van, who handed the impressed Keith a cassette featuring some of his own tunes, with the word 'Prodigy' scrawled on it, after the Moog Prodigy synth on which he'd made the music. The DJ was Liam. After recruiting fellow dancers Leeroy Thornhill and Sharky, and MC Maxim Reality, The Prodigy were born.

Although he didn't sing, Keith was different from the other live dancers that rave bands had employed. Energy burst out of him, and the aggression that marked out The Prodigy from their dance music peers seemed to be reflected in his onstage persona. "Music has always been a trigger to bang my head on the wall," he told Kerrang! in 2002. "When I was a kid, if I couldn't get enough out of a song I was into, I'd have to jump off something, or smash something. That's just what it did for me."

Upping the fury of their shows after seeing how mad people were going to bands like Rage Against The Machine and Biohazard, The Prodigy, with Keith as wild-eyed ringmaster, became an impossible act to follow. Still, it hadn't prepared people for when he opened his mouth and breathed fire for the first time. Immediately, he became an icon. When asked about the perceived change in his bandmate, Liam Howlett simply chuckled that, "He hasn't changed, he's just cut his hair." But something had.

When The Fat Of The Land emerged in June 1997, going on to sell over 10 million copies, The Prodigy's status as one of the most important bands on Earth was cemented, with Keith as the poster boy. But while onstage his furious presence could be genuinely intimidating and scary (something which didn't let up, even until the band's unintentionally final tour last year), off it The Firestarter was a very different man.

Away from the band, the raging wild man retreated from bright lights and celebrity, instead living as a quiet, country gent who lived in a cottage and owned a pub (The Leather Bottle in the village of Pleshey). Albeit one with a motorcycle track in his garden who tore up races with his Team Traction Control motocross group in the band's long downtime while Liam worked on 2015's The Day Is My Enemy album.

"You need to do something that's fulfilling, something that has enough of a buzz at the end of it," he explained. "Something that takes time and dedication and gives you the same wholesome reward that you get from being in the band."

Tragically, it's a reward that has been taken away from so many people far too early. Because even if you never met the man, experiencing the full force of his energy live was a genuinely thrilling thing nobody who experienced it could ever forget.

The tributes that have poured in from his friends and peers in the days following his tragic death all describe a man with a huge heart, a polite manner and no end of kindness. The first few times Tom Morello met him at festivals, he didn't even realise he was in a band, just that he was a nice dude. Foo Fighters, whose frontman Dave Grohl played drums on Prodge's Run With The Wolves, thanked him for "the inspiration, music and friendship", while former Dillinger Escape Plan guitarist Ben Weinman shared a story of eating M&M's with Keith as the singer told him of the inner peace looking after horses had brought him, urging him to do the same. And when at an awards ceremony, James Blunt of all people – surely the opposite of The Prodigy's seatbelt-free thrill-ride – found himself mocked by Damon Albarn, Noel Gallagher and Paul Weller, Keith introduced himself "and congratulated me on all my successes".

As a long-time friend of Keith, and one of the first journalists to throw their weight behind The Prodigy, Kerrang!'s Mörat is among those feeling the loss of not just an icon, but a close pal. Beginning over the page, he remembers the man he knew...

The Prodigy smash their Download headline set, 2012

"DOWNLOAD TOOK THE PRODIGY TO THEIR HEARTS"

ANDY COPPING – the man who brought THE PRODIGY to DOWNLOAD – pays tribute to Keith and the crossover kings of Donington...

FOR YOU, WHAT HAS THE ROCK WORLD LOST WITH THE PASSING OF KEITH FLINT?

"We've lost another amazing frontman. I mean, you almost forget that with The Prodigy it has always been about their sound, but Keith orchestrated everything, and he was the focal point of the band. When most people think of The Prodigy, they think of Keith. I think he elevated The Prodigy from what they were to this iconic and original band. They were like a rock'n'roll band. It was punk, it was edgy, it was angsty. I remember when I first booked them to play Download in 2006, the majority of rock music fans thought I was insane for booking them, but I knew what they would bring to the festival. As a band they transcended that pigeonhole of being a dance act. They played the second stage, which was in a tent at the time. People were climbing poles inside the tent, and you could not move in there."

AND, OF COURSE, IN 2012 THEY HEADLINED DOWNLOAD FOR THE FIRST TIME...

"In 2012 – and we mustn't lose sight of this – when The Prodigy headlined, it was the biggest-selling Download we've ever had. People go, 'Yeah, but you had Black Sabbath on the bill and Metallica on the bill,' but the bulk of our tickets were weekend sales, so people wanted to be there for the whole thing. Even though the weather was fucking horrendous, The Prodigy absolutely fucking smashed it."

HOW DID THE BAND FEEL ABOUT FACING THE PROSPECT OF HEADLINING DOWNLOAD?

"There was a real confidence about them when they headlined. There were still people saying they shouldn't headline the festival, but for me it was a no-brainer. They absolutely deserved to headline; they had already sold out Milton Keynes Bowl, and we knew what the band were capable of doing in terms of putting on a show – a proper rock show. There was a confidence about them, they didn't have any doubts and they really appreciated the fact that they were given the opportunity, so they totally stepped up to the plate. They were just amazing. I had been in talks with getting them back at Download since then, but we'd not been able to do it. I hope it's not the end of the band, because I think it would be a crying shame if there was no Prodigy."

WHAT WAS KEITH LIKE ON A PERSONAL LEVEL?

"He was always respectful; always a bit of a cheeky-chappy; always up for a laugh; he loved what he was doing and above everything was just massively respectful. He always had time to say hello when I saw him. He would go, 'Fucking Download is our favourite festival,' and he never forgot what it meant to them as a band and to him as a person. The festival took The Prodigy and Keith to their hearts and he never lost that – he always remembered that."

WORDS: JAMES HINDLE PHOTOS: TOM MARTIN

KEITH, IN HIS OWN WORDS

Life, music and The Prodigy in Keith's own inimitable voice...

"AT THE END OF THE DAY, IF PEOPLE FIND ME SCARY, FUCK 'EM"

"We're probably one of the only bands who've supported Metallica more than once and not had bags of piss thrown at us"

"I AM KIND OF A COURT JESTER MEETS ASYLUM ESCAPEE"

"The sooner you become aware that you're mortal, the sooner you start living"

"FAME IS A PAIN IN THE ARSE SOMETIMES"

Keith: an icon of cool

"I'VE BEEN SCREAMING AT PEOPLE WITH MY BODY"

"I've always felt like a fan of the band that's got onstage and hasn't been thrown off"

"MY SCHOOL RESULTS WERE TERRIBLE AND I DON'T KNOW HOW TO WALLPAPER OR DO ANYTHING ELSE"

"Don't you think it's kind of cool to have a band that offends MTV?"

"ONE OF OUR BLESSINGS IS THAT NO-ONE COULD REALLY PUT A NAME ON WHAT WE DO"

"REST IN PEACE, FIRESTARTER"

Some 24 years ago, writer and photographer MÖRAT was responsible for bringing THE PRODIGY into the Kerrang! world. Here, he pays tribute to a man he came to know away from the stage…

Keith and guitarist Gizz Butt terrify Reading, 1996

PHOTO: MÖRAT

This one hurts. Fuck, they *all* hurt. We've lost too many in recent years, and it will never get any easier to deal with. Whether we knew them personally or they touched our lives with their music, inevitably we'll spend the day reading tributes on social media, posting sad-face emojis, searching for answers, numb and heartbroken. But somehow this is different. The fire has gone out. At just 49 years old, Prodigy frontman Keith Flint has died by suicide. The party is over.

And maybe that's why this sucks so much and is so very difficult to comprehend. You see, The Prodigy didn't write sad songs, never fell on black days. They were the soundtrack to 'aving it large and jumping around like your boots were on fire, the punkin' instigators who always put a smile on your face. Whether it was on a club dancefloor or in a muddy field, you couldn't *not* dance, couldn't *not* feel alive to your very core. And Keith, in many ways, was the host of the party, danger illustrated, mad as a bag of weasels, the twin-mohawked loony with a lust for life… A life ended far too soon.

I first saw The Prodigy when they headlined the second stage at Glastonbury in June 1995. It was an accident. A couple of friends wanted to check them out, so we stumbled across the big field and waited for what seemed like an eternity. The booze was wearing off and had I realised that these were the same white-gloved ravers that I'd seen on telly dancing around to cat noises (the Charly single of 1991), I'd have gone elsewhere. Instead, they hit the stage with Break & Enter and the entire field went fucking nuts. We danced like maniacs; punks, bikers, hippies, ravers… disparate clans not giving a fuck.

On the Monday morning I went into Kerrang! and told our long-suffering then-editor, Phil Alexander, that I wanted to write a feature about them. Perhaps unsurprisingly, he said no. This was not a band who were on Kerrang!'s radar. At all. Hell, they weren't even a band, just a bunch of button-pushing buffoons who were the antithesis of everything the magazine stood for. He continued, despite my pleas, to say no for the rest of the week.

And the week after that.

Two months later – having not shut up – I was finally dispatched to T In The Park in Scotland to do a two-page feature, and, once again, The Prodigy knocked it out of the park, untouchable in every respect. They also cancelled an interview with the BBC in order to talk to Kerrang!. It was the first time I met Keith Flint and he, like the rest of the band, were not at all what I expected. He was quiet, polite, friendly, funny, and, what's more, strangely grateful that Kerrang! were giving them the time of day. Music For The Jilted Generation, from 1994, was a Number One album, they were already massive, and yet they acted as if we were somehow doing *them* a favour and not the other way around.

It was difficult not to like Keith. A previously unemployable hippy/biker, he'd bummed around Europe for eight months before returning to his home in Braintree in the late-'80s and stumbling across the burgeoning rave scene, drawn to its energy like a moth to a flame. But he was also a veteran of the Hells Angels Kent Custom Bike Show and a kindred spirit.

"I used to go and watch the Hamsters and Dumpy's Rusty Nuts at these biker things," he told me. "Roar there, get stoned, you couldn't ride home so you'd get pissed and stay the night, sleeping beside your trusty steed."

He loved his bikes and would eventually come to own a racing team, Team Traction Control, who competed in the British Superbike Championship and won three Isle Of Man TT races. Ever the adrenaline junkie, he was also clocked by Motorcycle

News doing 167mph on a drag-strip. Among the tributes pouring in, there came one from World Superbike Champion Carl Fogarty, such was the respect for him in racing circles.

But I digress. When that first feature came out in Kerrang!, the magazine received death threats. The Prodigy was not metal! And, to be fair, people were right; The Prodigy was anything but metal. They did, however, kick major ass, and over the next few months the tide slowly turned, not least with the release of the brilliant Firestarter single in March 1996, which featured Flint on vocals for the first time and spent three weeks at Number One. The iconic video, featuring a pierced and snarling Keith apparently advocating arson, was everywhere, the Daily Mail's headline shouting 'Ban This Sick Fire Record'. Much to The Prodigy's amusement, there were even questions asked in the Houses Of Parliament.

"It's a joke, innit," Keith laughed at the time. "I mean, if you did write a song which said something as blatant as that, and it did happen, then you'd write songs that went, *'Give me money, give me fucking money, give me really nice clothes, give me really cool drugs, give me money.'"*

The Prodigy had stopped doing press at this time – they simply didn't need it – but it says a great deal about them that they continued to talk to Kerrang!. We'd stuck our necks out and they didn't forget it. (Indeed, later at the Kerrang! Awards 2006, Keith and his bandmates would pay tribute to our long-running support: "We're not here to just cruise around picking up awards because we think we're cool. We're here for a reason: because we were supported, and because it was real. Fuck everything else.") And so I got to know Keith a lot better over the years, both on and off the record. I followed them around the world – Australia, France, Holland, Ireland, Los Angeles, all around the UK. Once in a while we'd sit in his hotel room smoking weed until the sun came up. They were never less than awesome, and Keith was never less than… *Keith*. He wasn't just a bonkers firestarter; he was a multilayered, complex human being, not always comfortable with fame, sometimes even a little shy, but never less than personable and down to earth.

"I'm really pleased that I'm quite mellow in myself," he told me one time. "It's just as shocking for people. They're almost waiting for me to explode. But that's me, and what I'm like onstage, that's me too."

Likewise, his 'image' – the flame-haired mentalist – was far more than just an image.

"It's just me," he explained, when The Fat Of The Land was Number One in 22 countries and he'd become very much the face of a generation. "I didn't design it for the band, but the band allows me to do it. Anything I do now is for the band because that's my life, but I don't do it for the band in the first place."

More than anything, it was the band that made Keith happy. We talked about it often, the buzz he'd get from being in one of the greatest live bands on Earth, charging around the stage like he'd been let off a leash, often diving into the crowd to be one with the audience. That massive rush.

"Before we went onstage at Brixton Academy, you couldn't have injected me with any drug that made me feel better than that," he said. "Any more than that and I would've felt ill, my head wouldn't have been able to handle it. It was like tripping to the max!"

Top: Keith, never short of a reaction… Bottom: (from left) Liam Howlett, Keith Flint, Leeroy Thornhill and Maxim Reality

And then…

"I'm seriously frightened of becoming [old], 'cos I reckon I'll be firestarting until I'm 60, with this beer gut, thinking I've still got it. I won't have to shave the middle of my hair because I'll be totally bald."

That was Keith's sense of humour. At the height of his fame, he got a bit pissed-off with people forever shouting, 'Firestarter' at him everywhere he went, but in later years after he bought his pub, he saw the funny side and by all accounts had a log fire and a swear jar into which people would have to put money whenever they said the inevitable.

But with the massive highs come the massive lows. Keith made no secret of his battle with drugs and depression. Like all of us, he had his demons, an unhappy childhood and a broken home. As early as 1996 we talked about Kurt Cobain's suicide and, almost casually, he remarked, "I could kill myself easily." Then, in 2015, there was an interview with journalist Matt Blake. "I'm not saving up for anything," said Keith. "I'm cashing it all in now. I've always had this thing inside me that, when I'm done, I'll kill myself. I swear to God that's not suicidal, that's a positive thing."

The tragedy is that The Prodigy were far from done. Only last year, the No Tourists album debuted at Number One, their sixth consecutive album to do so, while the likes of Invaders Must Die and The Day Is My Enemy still feel as fresh and vital as the day they were released. The Prodigy had shows booked, minds to blow, and so much more timeless music to offer. But now all we can do is hope to remember the good times. Not just good, but the *best of* times. The all-nighters at Brixton Academy, dancing in the pissing rain at Glastonbury and Reading and Download, and not giving a fuck about tomorrow because The Prodigy were *now*. More than any other band, they brought us together, broke down barriers and made us one. And they did so entirely on their own terms – vastly influential and yet totally inimitable.

"To walk offstage one day and think that's your last show seems more frightening than death," Keith told me a long time ago.

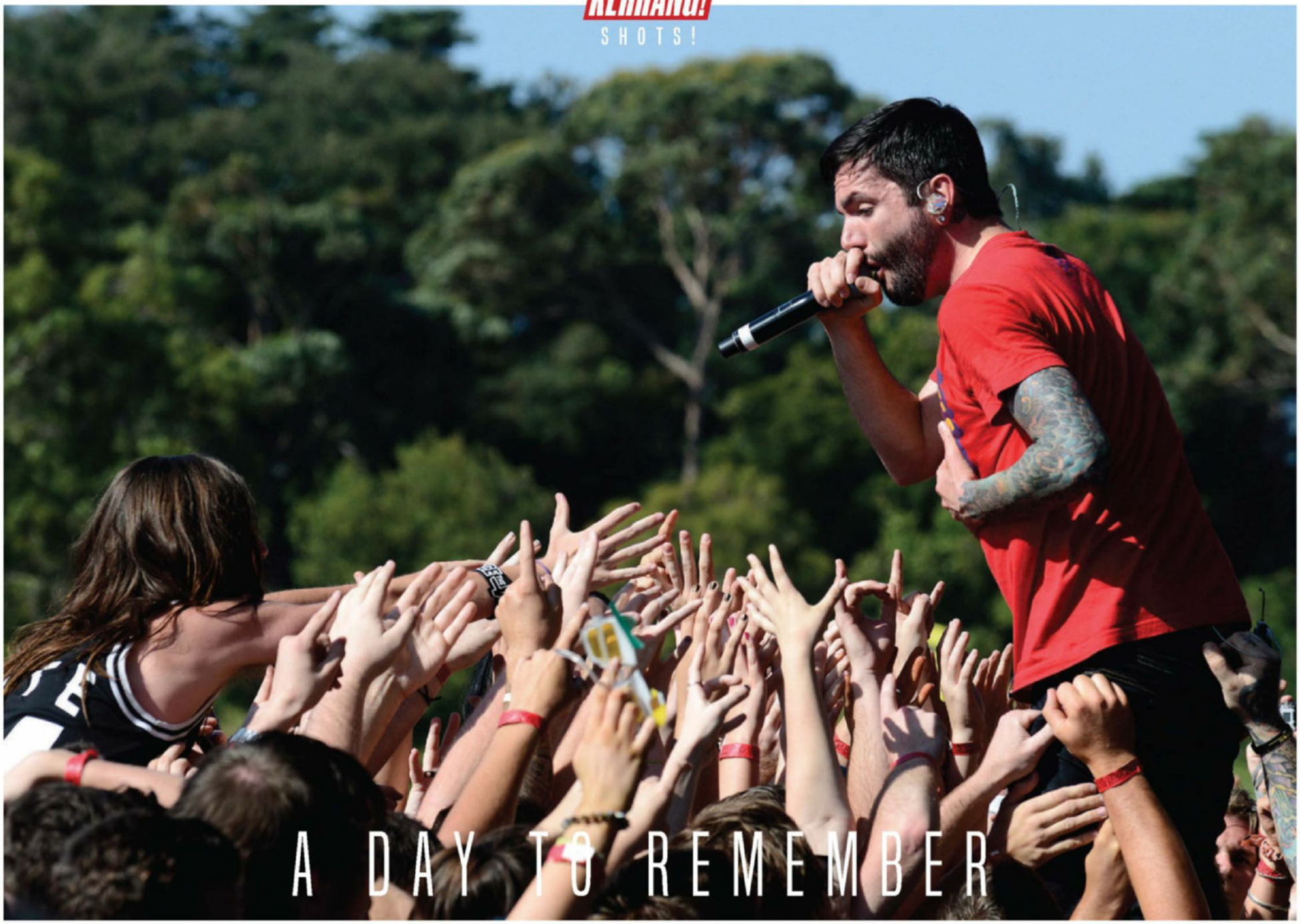
If only it had been.

Rest in peace, firestarter. We're going to miss you. **K!**

Onstage at the Phoenix Festival during the height of Firestarter-mania, July 1996

GETTY

A DAY TO REMEMBER



A DAY TO REMEMBER

PHOTO: MARTIN PHILBEY

A DAY TO REMEMBER

PHOTO: ANDREW LIPOVSKY

A DAY TO REMEMBER

PHOTO: CHRIS CASEY

A DAY TO REMEMBER

"I WAS UNABLE TO ARTICULATE MY DISCONTENT, SO I TENDED TO act up. I even TOOK A SHIT IN STEVE VAI'S GUITAR CASE..."

DEVIN TOWNSEND STRAPPING YOUNG LAD

WORDS: IAN WINWOOD PHOTO: GOBINDER JHITTA

Devin Townsend doesn't seem like the kind of person who was once a member of a band who destroyed the Kerrang! office. But in the '90s, as the guitarist in the then dependably combustible Wildhearts, he watched with concern as the group travelled to London and, making their way into the former offices of this very magazine, smashed the place to pieces with baseball bats. The reason? They were displeased with something we wrote about them.

It says something about this likeable and articulate Canadian that while this carnage was taking place, he himself was indoors in the West Midlands village that at the time he called home. For a long period afterward, upon meeting any representatives from Kerrang!, he would be sure to tell them, "You know, I wasn't actually involved in any of that stuff."

A generation on, today Devin Townsend sits amid the soft furnishings of an informal meeting room of an otherwise hectic and chaotic major label record company in South Kensington. Understated to the point of anonymity, the 46-year-old British Columbian is nonetheless the architect and author of a vast array of musical projects, including numerous solo albums and releases under the umbrella of Strapping Young Lad and the Devin Townsend Project, both now defunct. This month sees the release of the impressive Empath, his 18th solo outing.

Despite a deeply Canadian instinct to downplay any measure of earned success, today Devin sits within walking distance of the Royal Albert Hall, the world's loveliest venue and a stage on which he has performed as a headliner. Outside it is raining and dismal, conditions to which he feels suited. He jokes that a dislike of ice hockey and an indifference to the music of

Remind us to never leave our guitar cases unattended around this man

Devin spots the fella who nicked his hat

DEVY METAL

Strap in for all the **DEVIN TOWNSEND** info you'll ever need...

BORN: May 5, 1972, New Westminister, British Columbia.
LIVES: Vancouver.
EDUCATION: North Surrey Secondary, British Columbia.
BANDS: Strapping Young Lad, Devin Townsend Project, The Wildhearts, solo.
SPECIAL SKILLS: A limitless imagination and skill, usually applied to the most bonkers of concept albums.
MOST LIKELY TO SAY: "I'm going to play the most complicated song you've ever heard. With my eyes closed."
LEAST LIKELY TO SAY: "I'm having such a bad hair day."
HE'S A LEGEND BECAUSE: In turning a blind eye to commercial concerns, he's built a successful career as the musical misfit's misfit. And done so with a bloody-minded wilfulness that's earned respect and loyalty on a global scale.

GETTY

Rush might endanger his status as a Canadian, but clouds that hang at eyebrow level are very much to his liking.

"I find social interaction difficult," he says, by way of explanation. "I find small talk difficult, because you just don't care, right? So I like it when it's gloomy because there's so much less chance that you'll actually run into someone."

Aside from Kerrang!, that is…

Visiting Vancouver, Homer Simpson once famously said, 'Grab your winter coat, we're going to Canada's warmest city.' Tell us all about the place.

"Vancouver is great. The geography played into my work in every conceivable way. I actually moved to Los Angeles when I was in my early 20s, and I found that I couldn't write anything because I was still connected to the misery that is seven months of the year in Vancouver. I think if there's anything that Vancouver has instilled in me, it's nature and the trees and all that kind of stuff. It's always been drizzly there for as long as I can remember, and there's something about that – if you're raised with it, it becomes a part of your DNA almost. I think my musical identity was really tied up with that. I like the gloominess."

What first pushed the young Devin Townsend towards music?

"It was the soundtrack to the movie The Dark Crystal. I loved that movie because it was a very child-friendly version of The Lord Of The Rings, in a sense. It's a Jim Henson movie, and it plays into notions of duality – you had two characters who at one time were one and then they come back together. Trevor Jones did the soundtrack for that and I remember listening to it incessantly. There was something about the tonality of it that really spoke to me."

What led you from that to…

"Heavy metal?"

Well, to being a practitioner of heavy music.

"I love new-age music. I love the kind of flute music that led me to loving Enya. I love musicals, Euro pop and things like the Eurythmics. But then hearing Slade is where everything changed. I heard the song Run Runaway and thought it was great. That song was like a quantum leap into things that were more rock-based. I went out to buy the single and Bon Jovi had released the song Runaway, which is the one that I ended up purchasing. Strangely, I've ended up disliking Bon Jovi ever since, because I bought the wrong single!"

As a young man, you landed the gig as the singer with ace guitarist Steve Vai's band. How did that come about?

"It seems like yesterday, but at that point I was actually 19 years of age. I'd sent a demo tape off to Relativity Records, and I got signed. On the same label was Steve Vai, who had just put out a solo record and was looking for a singer. The A&R guy passed on my demo to Steve and he asked me to participate. I joined his fold and we recorded an album in 1991 or 1992, and we did two years of touring on that. We did things like play with Aerosmith and appear on The Tonight Show, so it really was in at the deep end. It was pretty over-the-top for someone who had never had that kind of experience. I had never played in arenas before, for one thing. I've always been very idealistic about music, and when I moved to LA, which I did at this time, I assumed that all musicians felt that way. I pictured an empathetic and nurturing industry. But, the music industry is, overall, a disingenuous place. It's a hustle. So when I went down there I was deflowered pretty quickly. And I felt at that point that I wanted to take and make things explode."

Devin Townsend: brilliant musician, rubbish at DIY

Steve Vai seems like a nice person, though.

"Yeah. But he was coming off the Whitesnake thing [for whom he had played] so he really was a rock star at this point. Thirty years on, our relationship has taken a good turn and we're close. But I think at the time, I didn't have many ways that I felt I was able to articulate my discontent, so I tended to act up. I took a shit in his guitar case, for one thing…"

Literally?

"Yeah, which I guess was confusing for him. I think that I felt that unequivocally that would express my discontent with how I was feeling about things."

Also in the '90s you did a stint as the guitarist in The Wildhearts, who are dependably anti-establishment. Was that fun?

"In my own, very passive-aggressive way, I'm anti-establishment. But I don't want to offend people, which is probably the Canadian in me. When the band were going to the Kerrang! office to smash it up I said, 'How come?' And they said, 'Well, they gave us a bad review.' And I said, 'Okay, erm, I'm just gonna stay here, if that's okay.' But I remember when they came back there was this giant existential turmoil that engulfed the whole camp over something that clearly they had a choice to do or not. They weren't victims of circumstance. And I remember thinking, 'Well, this is odd.' And I think that's where the disconnect was. We related in a lot of ways, but I didn't feel the need to make things that confrontational. There was a lot of the romance at that time with them, regarding what it means to be anti-establishment in a rock band. I was never really in love with the romance in music, I guess because I'd had that experience in LA of, 'Oh, this is bullllshit!'"

Is it correct that you are bipolar?

"Well, they diagnosed me as being bipolar. They have to tick off seven out of 12 symptoms that would clinically put you in a position where you're eligible for help. The combination of profound insecurity, narcissism on my part, a ton of experiences with Steve and other artists, and a couple of years of deciding that I was going to do hallucinogens – this, after having done no drugs whatsoever – put me into a manic frame of mind, in which I made a series of terrible life decisions. I was in a psychiatric hospital, for example.

"But 10 to 15 years after that I was able to sit down with a psychiatrist and say, 'I display these symptoms, but I would like you to entertain the notion that it was a result of my surroundings, combined with my use of hallucinogenic substances.' So, in answer to your question – am I bipolar? No, I don't think I am. But the symptoms I displayed were very much in line with that, and in my work I've had the opportunity to help, in some way, people who are struggling with these things. It is, though, very important to stress that when I came off the medication that I'd been prescribed, I did so under guidance."

How do you keep those black dogs at bay now?

"I find that meditation helps. Exercise is also helpful. Ultimately, I think these symptoms that people are displaying now – depression, bipolar, schizophrenia – are tied into industrial disease as well. Empathy is part of the human condition, but given how angry civilisation is right now, it's a quality that's seen as a weakness. That's how fucked up it all is. It puts us in a position where we have to suppress our innate nature. That tendency can exhibit itself in various ways of mental illness."

You're abstinent now from drugs and alcohol…

"For the most part."

Was that something you needed to do to straighten yourself out?

"Basically, I think for me my goals in life are to

become self-actualised in some way. I think when it comes to food and caffeine, and lots of things, I need to figure out my relationship with them. So, when I've made a decision as to whether or not I'm a vegetarian, it comes from a place of actual knowledge. I'm vegetarian because that's what spiritual people do. And the same comes to my relationship with alcohol. Abstinence is easier than moderation. Moderation is difficult because it forces you to have respect for yourself, which on a very basic level is where a lot of us struggle. Self-love is difficult. For me now, abstinence is about being as close to my true self as I can be. It's no longer about a fear of losing it or fucking up. It's simply that my true nature is going to be less obstructed the less shit I put into my system."

Despite being unpredictable at every turn, you've attained sizeable commercial success. Is this pleasing to you?

"It's something that I tend to be nonchalant about. My unpredictability as an artist is down to nothing more than me being bullheaded. It's not an intentional thing. The romantic thing to say would be, 'Well, hey, I've stuck to my guns the whole time,' but I'm just bullheaded. I do things that I want to do."

Isn't that a significant part of your appeal?

"Well, that's nice to hear. I think, though, that the music industry is historically disingenuous, right? I've failed publicly on many occasions, and I think that having gone through that means that I've developed an invulnerability that people can relate to. As much as I would love to be perfect – the perfect singer, the perfect guitarist – the fact that I'm not means that people are willing to invest in me as a fuck-up who's trying *not to* fuck up. That's how I've structured most of my career."

Is it true that an A&R from Roadrunner once dismissed your music as being 'unlistenable'?

"(*Laughing*) Yeah, that's true – I don't think he'd be the only one, either! Even hearing that, I'm shockingly unfazed by people thinking whatever they want to think about my music. It doesn't bother me either way. The music represents periods of my life. You have the music that I made when I was 25, and at 29, and so on. You have the music I made when I was angry, and then when I was confused. And I guess now you have the music that's being made now that I'm having my midlife crisis!"

> **"I'M DONE PRETENDING TO BE SOMETHING I'M NOT"**
> DEVIN TOWNSEND

Which brings us on to your new album, Empath. How has this come together?

"I've got a hyper-sensitivity to media, to stimulus, to sound. I've always had it and it's also been a cross to bear for my family. I find that stimulus in general exhausts me in a way that is very destructive, if I'm not careful. It's taken me many years to figure out that it's within my power to control my environment. So Empath is almost a mission statement. After almost – what? – 30 records or something now, one consistent thing throughout it has been record labels telling me that I can't put all these different things in one place. I've been told that I have to have an identity. And also there's the heavy music scene itself, which people believe isn't a place for theatre or meditational music. It's a really conservative environment. Empath is a gentle way of saying that because I never really fitted in, so why would I invest any more energy trying to suppress who I am, in all the emotionally sensitive ways that manifest themselves as peaks and valleys. Over the past five years I've also been conscientious regarding the audience. I have kids now, and as I get older the temptation *not* to push boundaries gets stronger. I find myself thinking, 'I've got to be careful – I've got an audience and I don't want to fuck that up.'"

Is Empath a reaction against that?

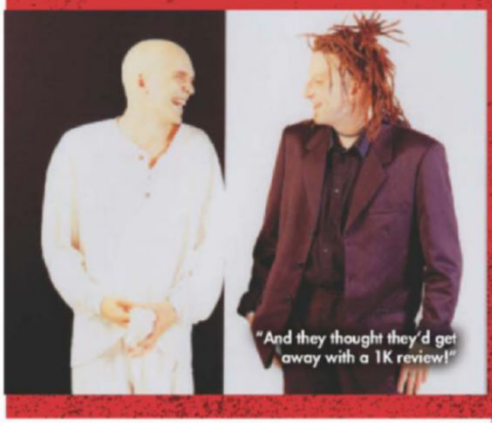
"Yeah. I realised that I was really bored. So I reacted against that. I realised that if I needed to fuck things up, then I should go ahead and do it. I wanted to reach people who want to hear me do that, and who will relate to it. I'm certain that my audience will get smaller as a result of this album, but that's okay. I'm done spending a great portion of my time pretending to be something that I'm not. Even if it dwindles, what I will have is an audience who listen because they want to. As I get older, the amount of energy I have to impress people diminishes. I don't want to be the guy who bursts into the AC/DC party with an Enya album under his arm. This record is me saying, 'Fuck it, I don't care. I'm gonna do what I want to do and if people like it, that's cool.'"

Would the young man who stood wide-eyed on the Sunset Strip like the artist he is today?

"Oh yeah. I was so desperate for validation then, but I was the same person that I am today. I don't give a fuck today, but I say that without any sense of anarchy; I've got a good life, I've been married for almost 30 years, and I have a son. I don't need anymore gear, I don't want a better car – I'm satisfied with what I have. The guy who stood on the Strip would look at me now and say, 'Thank God he got there in the end.'" ***K!***

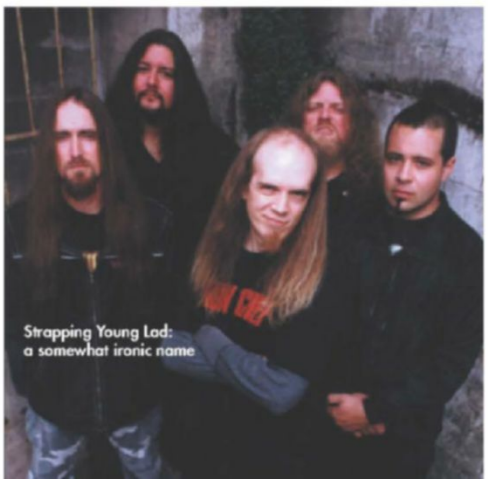
DEVIN TOWNSEND'S NEW ALBUM EMPATH IS AVAILABLE ON MARCH 29 VIA INSIDE OUT MUSIC. HE TOURS THE UK IN APRIL – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFORMATION

The cardboard cutouts of the band did a fine job of pretending to be the real thing



"And they thought they'd get away with a 1K review!"

Devin's Assassin's Creed costume: very good



Strapping Young Lad: a somewhat ironic name

KERRANG!

BRING THE NOISE

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THE INSIDE TRACK

THE GREAT UNKNOWN

Grunge was dead. Fans were looking elsewhere for upbeat rock thrills. And then came SOUNDGARDEN's SUPERUNKNOWN. Not only did it elevate its creators to heady new artistic and commercial heights, it left a legacy that's lasted 25 years…

WORDS: GEORGE GARNER **PHOTOS:** PAUL HARRIES, GETTY

It was a sudden loud thump that changed things. Up until that moment, Chris Cornell had spent the day working on a demo in his home's basement. He had a song brewing, but the words were eluding him as he went to investigate the strange noise upstairs. There Chris spied its grim source through a window: a female robin in its death throes. Unable to draw breath, its neck was broken after flying into the glass.

Moved by the sight of its writhing body, Chris euthanised the stricken bird with a nearby cinder block and buried its remains in his garden. When he returned to his basement, words started to come.

'*Heard it from another room*', he sang over a near 10-minute discordant jangle – his piercing voice strangely dimmed. '*Dazed out in a garden bed, with a broken neck, lays my broken gift, just like suicide.*'

The latter two words would soon become its title and the song itself the final track of Soundgarden's classic album Superunknown. As part of its 20th anniversary deluxe reissue's liner notes, Chris commented on how it became a metaphor for trauma he was still processing. Yes, it was literal – the lyrics detailed the plight of the robin, but they had also stirred in him some unprocessed grief for those he had lost. That included his friend, housemate and fellow musician Andrew Wood of Mother Love Bone – one of the brightest stars of the nascent Seattle scene, who had died in 1990 of a heroin overdose.

Decades after writing the song, Chris stated in the reissue it was "about all of these beautiful lives around us, twice as bright and half as long, careening into walls."

The layers of meaning here are but a microcosm of the album. Like Suicide is just one of 15 tracks that made up the record

Maybe employing four separate photographers was a bad idea after all

that would change Soundgarden's career and become one of the most revered rock albums of all time. In our original 5K review of Superunknown, we recognised it as "the work of a band whose creative powers are operating at their fullest."

It wasn't just a critical hit, either. In the rock community's collective conscience, it has long been maintained that grunge died almost at the exact same moment that news of Kurt Cobain's death broke. The received wisdom is that, after such a tragic denouement, rock audiences shifted towards the upbeat sounds of Green Day and The Offspring. Yet this doesn't tell the whole story. One of the defining bands and albums of the grunge – nee 'Seattle Sound' – scene didn't experience the height of their popularity until throughout that year and 1995.

Released 25 years ago on March 8, 1994 – less than a month before Kurt's death – Superunknown entered the charts at Number One in the U.S., went on to sell around nine million copies worldwide and even spawned an unlikely Top 20 hit. Rarely was an LP this bleak, this challenging, this musically progressive rewarded with pop star sales figures. Nor were Soundgarden used to it. It hadn't always been this way...

Soundgarden were the first of the big grunge acts to sprout and yet the last to bloom. At least commercially. Long before Nirvana and Pearl Jam struck gold with Nevermind and Ten respectively, Soundgarden had impressed with their staggering musical intelligence – fusing punk, metal and rock with an array of bewildering time signatures and dynamics. And that was to say nothing of Chris' voice: both sky-scraping and inimitable.

By 1991 they were drowning in critical acclaim following classic third album Badmotorfinger, but they weren't smashing charts. Moreover, when Soundgarden toured that album supporting Guns N' Roses, they soon found the rock world to be a divided nation. When K! interviewed them in Australia on their headline tour ahead of Superunknown's release, they were ecstatic simply to be playing to their own fans.

"We went to Europe with Guns N' Roses playing in front of 60,000 people who didn't give a shit about us," Chris reflected.

At the time of recording Superunknown in 1993, Soundgarden were a band searching for individuation: not just to distinguish themselves from every other band, but also from what they had done previously. First, they changed the way they worked.

"Someone would bring in a demo of a song they wrote, and as opposed to really concentrating on *why* we liked it and what it was about the original idea, we'd just sort of Soundgarden-ise it," Chris told K! about their old method. "That can make an album sound a little more sterile."

Their new material would be different and their musical remit would have to expand to accommodate it. Twenty tracks in total were made at Seattle's legendary Bad Animals studio with producer Michael Beinhorn, before whittling that number down to 15.

Chris Cornell delivered big moments aplenty, including the classic singles The Day I Tried To Live and Fell On Black Days, plus frenetic opener Let Me Drown. But one of his songs would, of course, go on to eclipse the rest, at least in terms of mainstream attention. Even in the present day, the disenchanted psychedelia of Black Hole Sun remains extraordinary. Chris told Rolling Stone he saw it as a "surreal, esoteric word painting".

Indeed, the whole album painted with an unrestricted palette. Keyboards, alternative tunings, viola, cello, spoons and, in the case of My Wave, even a nod to surf-rock were all introduced. It is, in the words of guitarist Kim Thayil speaking for a Spotify commentary on the 20th anniversary reissue, a "perfect headphones album".

Each member made big contributions. Some of the most arresting riffs belong neither to Chris nor Kim but rather drummer Matt Cameron, who not only conceived of the central riff for Mailman but also played mellotron on it. Fresh Tendrils was another Matt composition (made even more atypical by including clavinet), and so was the rising guitar of Limo Wreck. "Our drummer came up with *that*," gushed Kim.

Soundgarden take time out to think about what they've done in the naughty corner

"IT WAS THE PINNACLE OF OUR CAREER"
KIM THAYIL

Two of the album's most unique songs came courtesy of bassist Ben Shepherd. The disembodied, twisting strains of Head Down was his creation, as was the Indian music-influenced Half. Chris even refused to sing on the latter, insisting that it would lose its character without Ben's voice.

Kim Thayil not only served up the surging, punky Kickstand, as you would expect, he augmented songs brilliantly, adding compelling layers and riffs. Most stunning of all was his standout solo on Like Suicide.

Soundgarden didn't shy away from the molten noise that had defined them, either. On 4th Of July – inspired by Chris' LSD trip on an Indian reservation – they arguably delivered their heaviest moment.

When all of the above was put together in the studio, Soundgarden had recorded an album that fit their own adventurous brief and was set to confound expectations.

"There has been much rumour about Superunknown... the dreaded word 'commercial' has been bandied about," reported K! ahead of its release. "It's far from commercial, but it's not Badmotorfinger [the band's 1991 album] 2."

As its legacy would attest, this was something else entirely.

It was on a sunny evening in London's Hyde Park on – what else? – July 4 in 2014 that Soundgarden played their final UK show.

"We may never do this again," remarked Chris Cornell, addressing the audience as the band set about playing Superunknown for its 20th anniversary celebration. What was telling on that day is just how well the album had aged. Take Mailman, for instance.

"This next song is a narrative coming from a U.S. postal service worker," said Chris. "They do their job wonderfully. They wear little shorts in the summer, they're courteous, they're careful, they're nice to dogs, and then every once in a while they go into a post office and shoot every single co-worker they ever met. Other than that, though, their jobs are done in exemplary fashion."

The theme of the song has only gained further resonance since then.

Superunknown's songs influenced the next generation, too. Everyone from Linkin Park's Chester Bennington to The Pretty Reckless' Taylor Momsen would draw inspiration from it. But while its artistic and commercial success cannot be overstated, nor can the effect it had on its own creators.

"It was the pinnacle of our career, but we had difficult things going on," Kim Thayil told K! in 2012. "[The death of] Kurt was heavy and upsetting for us. Some of us had relationships falter, and we lost some other friends, too. We were dealing with personal loss while trying to grasp at professional success. I don't know if we ever fully appreciated it."

Soundgarden soon unravelled after their mainstream breakthrough. They would release one more (excellent) album, 1996's Down On The Upside, before imploding. Though it took 16 years before they would release 2012's King Animal, even in that protracted absence, Superunknown remained omnipresent in rock's collective conscience.

Much of it was dark, articulating themes of loss, depression and isolation with unflinching grace and a searing poetic edge. Reflecting with Rolling Stone in 2012, Chris – who had always been so allergic to nostalgia – reappraised their masterpiece.

"There's an eeriness in there, a kind of unresolvable sadness or indescribable longing that I've never really tried to isolate and define and fully understand," he said. "But it's always there. It's like a haunted thing."

In light of the tragedy of his passing in 2017, it is perhaps now more haunting than ever. The loss of Chris Cornell – and, indeed, of Soundgarden – is one rock fans will mourn greatly. But such grief should also be tempered by the undiminished power of their music. *'Alive in the Superunknown,'* Chris bellowed on the title-track's chorus. So he was then. So he shall remain. **K!**

SOUND'N'VISION

SUPERUNKNOWN wasn't limited to just timeless songs. For their 1994 classic, **SOUNDGARDEN** also hit a rich seam of form on its accompanying music videos...

SPOONMAN

Seattle is home to performing artist 'Artis The Spoonman' – who still plays spoons as an instrument at Pike Place Market. It was only natural, then, that Soundgarden would feature him playing in the song and video.

THE DAY I TRIED TO LIVE

A disturbed patient levitating in the air, scaling walls and crawling along the ceilings of a dank hospital ward? No, it's not the latest Blumhouse horror movie, just the plot of this unforgettable clip.

BLACK HOLE SUN

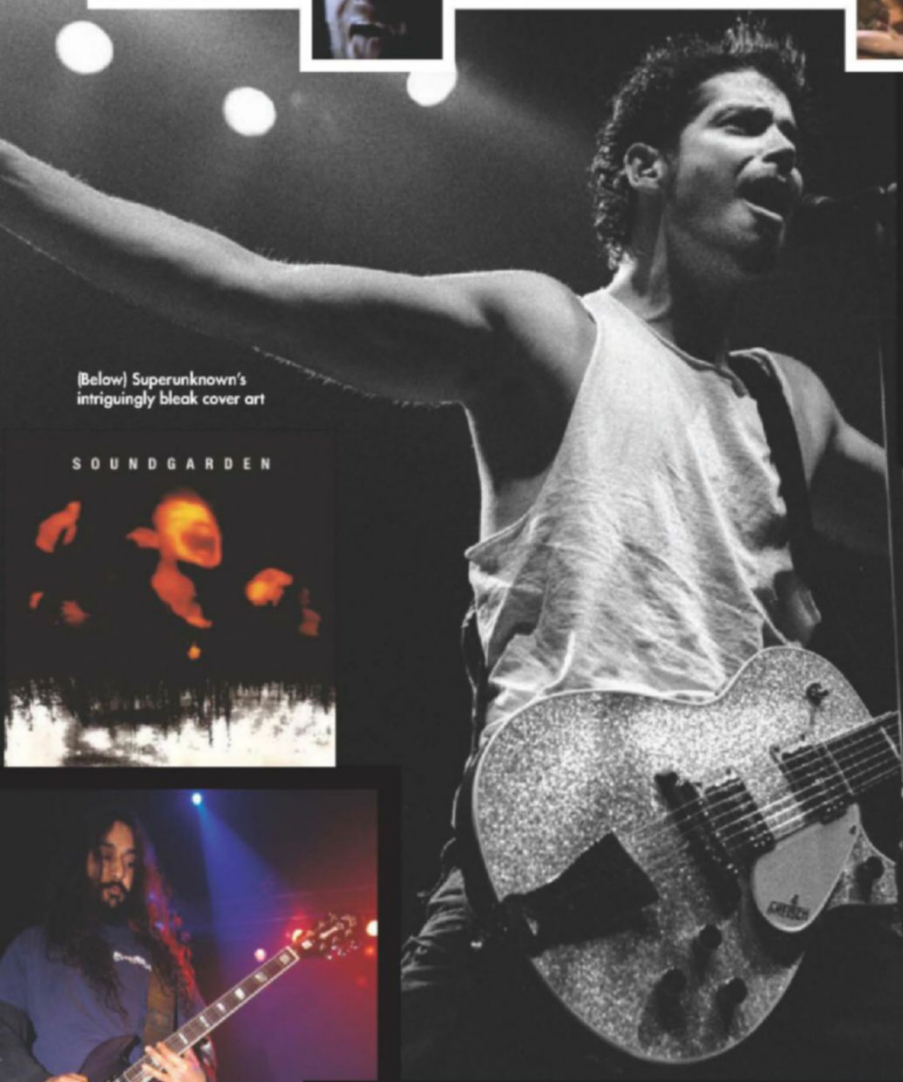
For many people, the video for Black Hole Sun forever crystallised who Soundgarden were. It's still hard to tell what's scarier: the titular vortex or the twisted humanity masquerading as normal.

MY WAVE

A family affair, the video for My Wave was directed by bassist Ben Shepherd's brother Henry. Partly filmed live in Calgary, it brilliantly captures what a Soundgarden show was like – you can practically smell the front rows.

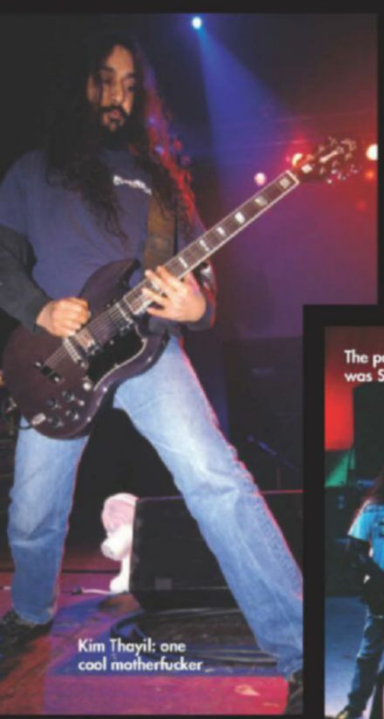
FELL ON BLACK DAYS

How do you make an already classic song feel even more classic? You shoot it in black and white, of course. Directed by Alien filmmaker Ridley Scott's son, Jake, who would also direct the 1996 video for Burden In My Hand.



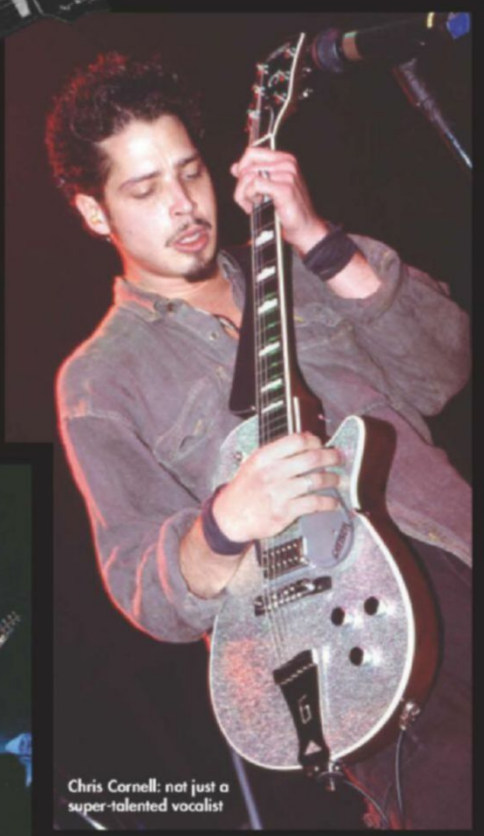
Soundgarden, 1994: a colourful bunch

(Below) Superunknown's intriguingly bleak cover art



Kim Thayil: one cool motherfucker

The powerhouse force that was Soundgarden live



Chris Cornell: not just a super-talented vocalist

Holding Absence's impromptu flower stall wasn't exactly doing a roaring trade...

IN BLOOM

HOLDING ABSENCE's story so far has been one blighted by mental health struggles and a stop-start ascension. But with their self-titled debut album, the Welsh post-hardcore crew are ready to blossom and embrace a colourful future...

WORDS: TOM SHEPHERD PHOTOS: GOBINDER JHITTA

Lucas Woodland leans forward and says: "When people listen to Holding Absence, I like to think that they see black and white." It's not as strange as it initially sounds. The Cardiff five-piece have been carefully curating their own visual aesthetic. Take a look at their social media, their merchandise and their music videos, and you will not find a drop of colour.

At least that *was* the case. A week after Kerrang! meets the 24-year-old frontman, the band put out a video for their track Monochrome. The song itself is a blistering burst of post-hardcore, with vocals from Lucas that one YouTube commenter claims are sung "with so much heart that he just became an organ donor". The four-minute clip, meanwhile, showing the singer taking pills, walking alone on a beach and pulling off a virtual reality headset – nods to his travails with mental health. Crucially, this all happens in colour, until, with about a minute left, it suddenly switches back to black and white, and then there's a twist: Lucas arrives at the location of the band's first video from two years ago. "Full circle baby," is how the frontman put it on Twitter.

It feels a bit like something out of a Black Mirror episode. But it's the kind of tricksy, surreal Easter egg that showcases the care and attention, but also the weirdness, that makes Holding Absence one of the most compelling young bands in the UK. It's also something now expected from their small but dedicated army of fans.

"When I play my favourite albums, from start to finish I feel like I'm in that band's world for a little bit," Lucas says. "It's like I've left the normal world, and now I'm part of this better world. So for us it was a way of painting an image and a universe for people to be a part of."

Bit late for Valentine's Day mate...

That universe is about to get a whole lot bigger with the arrival of the band's self-titled debut album. A sprawling, highly-detailed concept record, it charts the blossoming, wilting and mulching of a modern love. It, too, has many visual repeats – most notably flowers, as the songs follow a central character called Marigold. What colours this world most, though, is the emotional openness that Lucas brings to it. The singer has suffered in the past with poor mental health, and he uses his music as a place to hang his demons out to dry. Still, making the record was a process that he says he'd rather not endure again.

Sitting in the dark corner of a London pub, Lucas has the unusual advantage of visual prompts while discussing the artists that helped shape his big vision for the record. Raising his arm above his head to show Kerrang! his armpit – there, on his left bicep, sits a tattoo of the bloody couple from the Three Cheers For Sweet Revenge album cover, My Chemical Romance's lovelorn emo opera. He twists his wrist around to show, among others, a tribute to Thrice's Vheissu, and Pixies' Doolittle – a record known for its surreal scenes of Biblical violence and death. It's easy to see how he developed a taste for the strange. Oh, and there are two Pokémon on his legs.

He goes on to explain that the journey of Holding Absence up to this point has been a bumpy one. Lucas, who works in a rock bar in Cardiff, became a part of the set-up in the summer of 2016. A close friend with the other pre-existing members (he lived with two of them) and known for his talents having fronted another local group, Falling With Style, for five years, he was asked to join when the band were left without a vocalist ahead of a pre-arranged tour, and he accepted. Keen to have something to push on their travels, the group wrote the song that would become A Godsend and put it out online. Like something out of a movie, within a week there was label interest. Within a year the band were playing Download Festival.

The charmed life of the group came unstuck at the start 2018, however. Having started the recording of their full-length last January, the band's then guitarist and chief songwriter Feisal El-Khazragi left the group in March to join Liverpool metallers Loathe. It meant that Holding Absence were left as a three-piece, with Lucas, bassist James Joseph, drummer Ashley Green and no guitarist. It also meant they were left stranded with a half-finished record.

Asked whether the singer thought this period spelled the end for the band, he begins to nod enthusiastically. "Yeah, fully," he says. "I was truly aware that it could have just gone..." he trails off. "There was a time where out of pure persistence, really, we held the band together. I'll never ever be able to thank Ash and James enough for blindly holding on to Holding Absence with me, because for a while it didn't make sense."

"WE'VE GOT TO BE COMPLETELY OPEN ABOUT HOW WE FEEL"
LUCAS WOODLAND

The uncertainty of that no man's land weighed particularly heavy on Lucas. The vocalist had already begun constructing the vast lyrical concept that would thread through the record – a process that required extensive dredging of his own psyche: past mistakes, failed relationships and his mental health issues. "I experienced emotions on this album that I'd maybe not even admitted to myself," the singer says.

The recording hiatus meant that Lucas had unlimited time to obsess over his words, forcing him to relive his darker moments. "I was waking up every day, scrolling the lyrics and thinking about why I felt that way," he explains. "I dwelled on emotion. Because this album was so weirdly written, I spent months overthinking it. It was crazy. I'm just glad that I'm so at one with my feelings – I know that sounds lame. Because it was poisonous, it was toxic."

The three friends eventually found guitarists Scott Carey and Chris Smitheram from the local Cardiff music scene. Revitalised as a five-piece, the record would eventually be finished by the end of September. Having made it out the other side, Lucas says he believes it benefits from its messy recording process and having multiple fingerprints on it – so much so that it's adopted a raucous energy as a consequence.

"I truly think it benefits sonically," is how he puts it, "because certain drum sounds are different, certain guitar tones are different. So by the end of the album, you've been taken from A to Z."

With their debut completed, ask Lucas what he wants to achieve with this album and beyond, and he immediately tells you that his main objective is connection. The frontman describes himself as somebody with a strong link between his heart and his mouth, and he hopes that by being candid about his personal struggles, that Holding Absence will encourage fans to be more open about their own experiences.

"Not enough people are as emotionally in tune as they should be," he elaborates. "We're blessed to live in this current climate and age because so many people are allowed to talk about so many things and be so many things. And 100 years ago, or even 10, they couldn't. But now, I think, when you look at the end of stigma around mental health, I think we've got to be completely open about the way we feel, because we can, for the first time in maybe ever."

Lucas is keen to make it clear that he's not entirely out of the woods with regard to his own issues – and possibly never will be completely. But as an example of how things can improve, he's happy to be seen as a guide.

"The thing is, I've overcome, I've persisted, I've survived," he says. "I see kids that aren't there yet and I feel a duty to help; to let people see that it does get better. If they can connect to somebody on the other side of the tunnel, that will be the light they can aim towards."

For now, that connection and the impact that Holding Absence are having on the world is already starting to manifest. Fans as far away as Germany have been getting tattoos of the band's emblem – a half-decayed moth (see panel). For a band only on the cusp of their debut album, it's a hell of a commitment.

"It's phenomenal. It's the most humbling thing," Lucas says soberly of the pressure it could bring. "A lot of people believe in us at such an early stage. I could quit Holding Absence tomorrow and that'd be it... But these people have actually committed to this band for the rest of their lives. I feel like there's a duty in a certain respect, to make sure that we keep making good, genuine music for these people."

Provided the band hold up their end of the bargain, the future looks very bright indeed for Holding Absence. At last... K!

HOLDING ABSENCE'S SELF-TITLED DEBUT ALBUM IS OUT NOW VIA SHARPTONE RECORDS. THE BAND TOUR THE UK THIS MONTH AND PLAY 2000TREES IN JULY – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFORMATION

TO A FLAME

With fans already getting the HOLDING ABSENCE moth logo inked, we take a deeper look at the symbolic meaning behind it all... Or not!

"The moth actually predates me being in the band," Luke explains. "The logo has been in the band super-long actually. Honestly, it was just an image that one of the band members saw on Instagram – we ended up buying it from the artist for £40 (*laughs*)! And ever since then it's just taken off.

"Lots of people try to put a metaphorical meaning to it – for example, in our band there's a lot of duality between love, death, light, dark, happiness, sadness; obviously, an alive and half-dead moth is a nice visual representation. But it's just a cool thing that we saw a couple of years ago, and now it's tattooed on people – there's a throat tattoo, there's a chest tattoo, somebody's got it from one shoulder blade to the other. We've probably seen about 60-plus variations of it now. We've got a photo album full of them. It's crazy.

"We mailed [the artist who drew it] after the first tattoo, like, 'Dude, somebody got this tattooed.' And he never even responded!"

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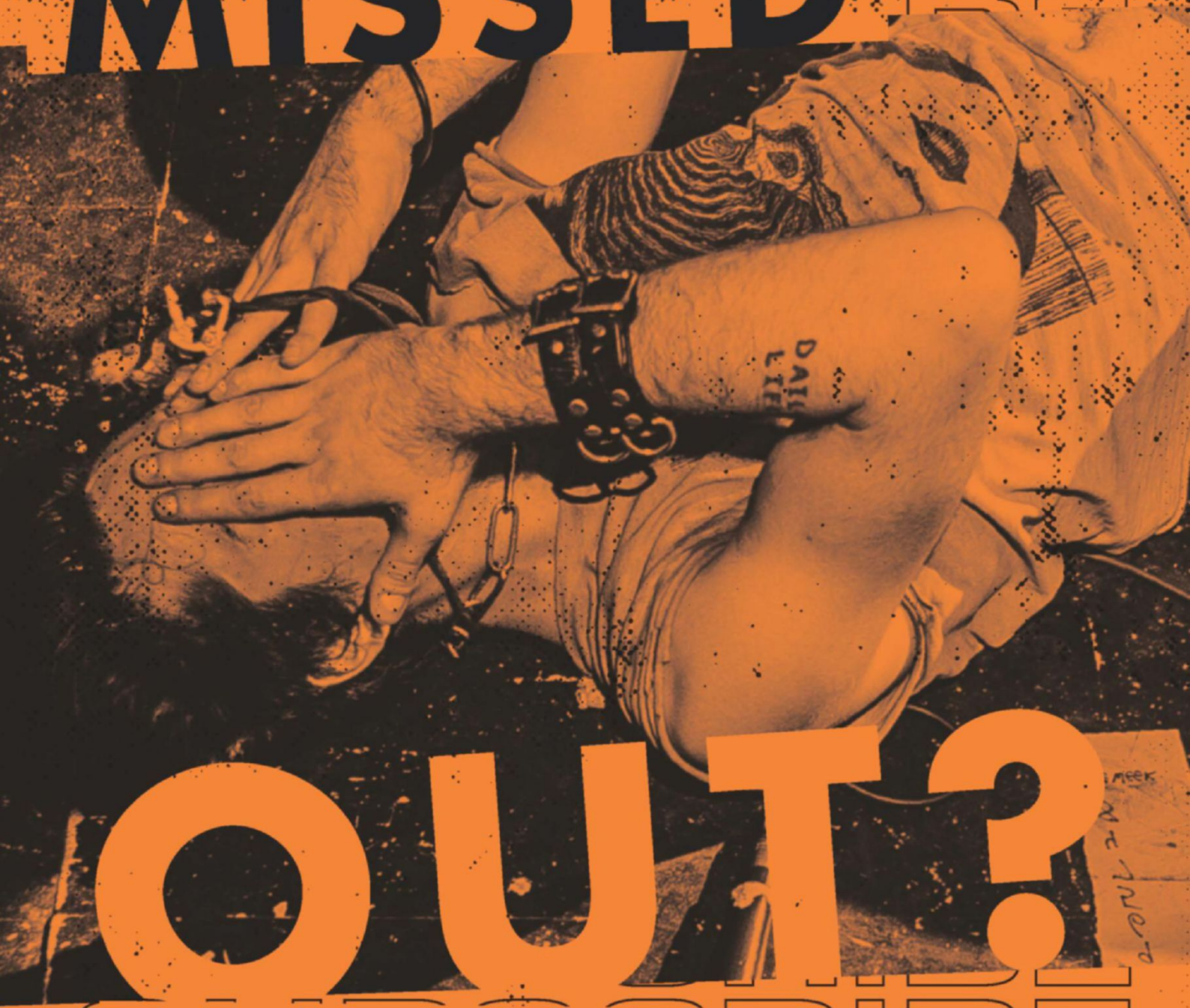

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REVIEWS

KKKKK = CLASSIC **KKKK** = EXCELLENT **KKK** = GOOD **KK** = AVERAGE **K** = POOR

Zero-G animals – a merch revolution

KICKING UP THE DU$T

Baltimore bruisers ANGEL DU$T unplug to explore a new kind of punk rock on third album

If you hadn't been paying close attention, you might be forgiven for thinking Justice Tripp was taking the piss. Angel Du$t – the punk rock impresario's main squeeze now that hardcore crew Trapped Under Ice have been on and off since 2013 – followed fellow Baltimore buddies in Turnstile by signing to Roadrunner Records late last year and unveiled two songs that sounded unlike pretty much anything they'd independently released across their previous two full-length albums. Big Ass Love and Take Away The Pain's acoustic jingle-jangle shimmied to the forefront, with 'proper' vocals showcasing insistent melodies, and in the case of the latter, a searing saxophone wail in its outro. Despite the two bands' previous similarities, and having the shared resources of three members serving time in each, if Roadrunner ever imagined they might be getting another version of Turnstile's 5K-rated Time & Space, no less than our Album Of 2018, this record will be a huge disappointment.

But look closer, retrace Justice Tripp's steps and it's not hard to see that far from being a belligerent 'up yours' to his new paymasters or Angel Du$t's existing fan base, Pretty Buff is an evolution, and a logical conclusion to the ever-softening sonic path he's been walking over the past few years. Don't believe us? Maybe you missed the sax wig-out on 2016's Rock The Fuck On Forever's closing track, Stranger Things. Listen again to the majority of that record, in fact, strip away the distortion, and you've got songs not dissimilar to the 13 on offer here.

None of which is to say that Pretty Buff is anything but a head-scratcher on initial plays. This is because charting where it came from and understanding the origins of the evolution is one thing, but coming to terms with it is another entirely.

Perhaps it's the lack of adrenalised, hyper-kinetic energy that propelled the frontman's largely fury-fuelled outlook previously. Songs aren't in such a rush now, and Justice seems more content, or at least collected and composed, where he once sounded hurried and hurt. Acoustic guitars, brushed drums and even cowbell take centre stage, while the sax comes back again with interest on Bang My Drum. When guitars are amped up, as on Biggest Girl, Push, Where I Am, or closer Five, they're still restrained and used in service to the melody and the song, much like Evan Dando's Lemonheads expertly did all through the '90s. The most tender moment here, fourth track Light Blue, might just be the most triumphant yet melancholic – calling to mind The Jam's stripped-back 1980 hit That's Entertainment. It's not hard to imagine all but that one with added distortion on top and this record coming off as a much more conventional affair, had the band been so inclined. Drop a few new songs into a catalogue-spanning live set and no-one would bat an eyelid at their difference to all that's come before. That's worth bearing in mind when some inevitably decry how much softer Angel Du$t are here.

There's no grandiose statement, big ideas or pretence involved – just 13 super-accessible, honest and artfully crafted songs. Once you get past how strange it is that they're coming from a source more commonly associated with the muscle and brawn of hardcore, there's lots to love about them. Turning that on its head is a pretty punk rock move – just not as you know it. **DAVID McLAUGHLIN**

Q&A JUSTICE TRIPP (VOCALS)

With each Angel Du$t release, it feels like you're moving away from your heavy hardcore roots. Do you see it that way, or is it more a case of reinventing what 'heavy' means?

"It's about finding the less obvious elements that give music its energy and drive. It's obvious that where you put distortion on your guitar and play in a certain way with your drummer beating the drums, it's going to sound heavy. I think there are cool, exciting ways of achieving that feeling. I think you could have a song without any drums on it that feels strong and special in the same way."

To what extent is the breezier, more eclectic style here a reaction to some elitists' perceived boundaries on what hardcore should be?

"We have that natural predilection towards standing out. For us, when [2016's] Rock The Fuck On Forever came out and was more easily accepted than anything else we'd done before, it was a nice feeling. But then, we realised that we don't want to make music that's the easy pill to swallow. Everything I've done that's been successful has been a little polarising. It's the best thing in the world to have a record where people say they don't know how to feel about music you've made. That doesn't mean they don't like it – it means they're looking for someone to say it's okay to like it."

> "WE DON'T WANT TO MAKE THE EASY PILL TO SWALLOW"
> JUSTICE TRIPP

How has the change to being on Roadrunner, together with your mates in Turnstile, been?

"It's kind of uncharted territory for a lot of people in the hardcore and punk world but, honestly, it's been magnificent. It's been so, so cool. Working as part of Pop Wig, I understand the importance of a record label giving credit to their bands, but the levels of time, work and resource the folk at Roadrunner have put into our vision is incredible. I'm very thankful for it."

INTERVIEW: SAM LAW

LXRD OF CHAOS

Meet SCARLXRD, Bring Me The Horizon's favourite trap metal trailblazer

The world of SoundCloud rap may share a penchant for facial tattoos with Oli Sykes, but only one of its practitioners got asked to join Bring Me The Horizon's All Points East line-up. Step forward Scarlxrd, a 24-year old from Wolverhampton who dresses like an anime character and, evidently, hates the letter 'O'. Incredibly, Infinity is his seventh album since the autumn of 2016, an achievement possibly linked to his past as a YouTuber, where maintaining a constant stream of content is crucial. This prodigious work rate aside, it isn't hard to see why Scarlxrd's profile is increasing exponentially, cutting across genre lines in the process. This is attention-grabbing music, marrying insistent trap beats with a vocal delivery that obnoxiously shreds the distinction between rapping and screaming his arse off, the latter element perfectly placed to turn the heads of Horizon fans who miss the days before Oli started singing properly.

Despite time fronting rap-rock outfit Myth City, undoubtedly a key point in his transition from jovial social media star to relentlessly dark trap MC, it is perhaps possible to overstate the metal content of Scarlxrd's work. For example, on Infinity, only I CAN DX WHAT I WANT features heavy guitars, and even on this track they're way down in the mix. But through atmosphere and lyrical intensity, it's still clear that this is music as influenced by the nihilism of Slipknot as the misanthropy of Eminem: All Hxpe Is Gxne, anyone?

The mood throughout the album is unremittingly bleak, as evidenced by song titles like I WANT TX SEE YXU BLEED, YXU MAKE ME SICK and STFU, none of which are likely to make the playlist at your nan's next birthday party. But while there's certainly a formula at work, as well as a tendency towards minimalism, Infinity isn't the one-note descent into negativity that it could have been in the hands of a lesser artist. BERZERK and HEAD GXNE show that Scarlxrd can cut it on more straightforward hip-hop tunes as well as the screamers, the latter sounding uncannily like peak-period Cypress Hill. HXW THEY JUDGE and DEMXNS AND ANGLES are melodic tunes rendered entirely unpretty by the wounded vocal howls being retched up all over them, putting the screamo into emo rap. Single SX SAD even introduces an element of playfulness to proceedings with a cartoony beat, making it the closest this iconoclastic artist has come to crafting something with mass appeal.

It's this willingness to expand the parameters of his vision that makes Scarlxrd a genuine one-off, not just in the rock world but also when compared to the flimsier talents of his SoundCloud rap contemporaries. Watch him go to Infinity and beyond. OLLY THOMAS

VIRCOLAC
MASQUE
(SEPULCHRAL VOICE)

KKKK

FOR FANS OF: Dead Congregation, Incantation, Grave Miasma

■ There is a darkness to Dublin death metal squadron Vircolac that comes from a shadowy, deathly place. In the discordance of the doomy title-track and the slashing Snake Among Man, they conjure up something haunting and morbid that is so often absent from this genre. Though fastidiously heavy, it's the way the minor-key melodies of So I Hang From A Wretched Tree and Tether & Wane sway and dangle in the air that gives these songs their atmosphere, occasionally touching on the trudging doom of Paradise Lost's earliest blasts of misery. And when The Long Trail kicks itself off with a burst of double-bass speed halfway through the album, the sudden blunt-force attrition is almost a surprise. Resolutely old-school throughout, this band's murky vision is a fetid treat for those in search of death metal with sharp, scrappy edges still intact, but with plenty of new ideas to mark themselves out in their own right. NICK RUSKELL

OREYEON
ODE TO OBLIVION
(HEAVY PSYCH SOUNDS)

KKKK

FOR FANS OF: Kyuss, Hawkwind, Nebula

■ Italian brain-melters Oreyeon play stoner rock, but rather than sit on one groove, they warp it toward unparalleled psychedelic dimensions on this second album. An intoxicating brew blending the classic '90s heat of Kyuss with doom and space rock, Ode To Oblivion towers over its predecessor, 2016's Builders Of Cosmos (released as Orion) like some celestial juggernaut intent on sonic annihilation. It's a heavier and darker mutation, radiating colossal grooves and nebulous leads, while Richard Silvaggio's hallucinatory voice channels their flawless energy into blistering and expansive soundscapes. Sprawling, flaring beasts like the monolithic sci-fi odyssey The Ones are interspersed with more uproarious goliaths like Big Surprise to strike a meditative balance between power and spirit. Erupting with kaleidoscopic force, it's easy to be consumed by the mind-bending frequencies and emerge feeling like you've been on a trip. JAMIE CANSDALE

PARTING GIFT
ENSOM
(FEARLESS)

KKKK

FOR FANS OF: Holding Absence, Emarosa, Northlane

■ Some records simply don't have good songs on them. Others try to mask that deficiency with fluffing production. Then there are those that have promising substance squandered by haphazard presentation. This EP by Manchester quartet Parting Gift sadly falls into the latter category. Pale is certainly a forceful opener, with the high vocals of frontman Zac Vernon – formerly of Welsh post-hardcore outfit Holding Absence – rushing at the listener. So, too, is the closing title-track. The problem is the nagging feeling that the overly airy production, which makes it sound like these five tracks were recorded in an aircraft hangar, saps much of the power that they're trying to convey. This relegates the efforts of the band's other three members to near sonic obscurity, creating an atmosphere of frustration rather than fascination. As gifts go, then, this one shows promise, but you wish they had presented it with more care. Hope they kept the receipt. JAMES HICKIE

NOISEM
CEASE TO EXIST
(20 BUCK SPIN)

KKK½

FOR FANS OF: Exhumed, Iron Reagan, Toxic Holocaust

■ Not to be confused with Japanese sonic terrorists Noism, Baltimore's Noisem deal in a savage thrash-death-grind hybrid that could strip the paint from a tank. Despite having a revamped line-up that includes a new frontman, their third full-length pretty much picks up where 2015's savage Blossoming Decay left off: in full-on kill-mode. With not a single song hitting the three-minute mark, the whole thing clocks in at less than half an hour, and they absolutely slay at all speeds. Despite the playing being tighter than Arnold Schwarzenegger's pickle jar lids, there's a winning raw scrappiness to the whole thing, almost as if the members are competing to make their contribution sound the most manic. If the likes of Downer Hound, Deplorable and the 55-second Filth And Stye don't get you wanting to smash stuff then you're probably a little too well-adjusted, for this is the perfect soundtrack to destruction in its ugliest form. DAN SLESSOR

FORMER WRESTLERS
CHAMPION OF THE WORLD
(SELF-RELEASED)

KK½

FOR FANS OF: Press To MECO, Good Tiger, Arcane Roots

■ Are you looking for muscle-bound, pile-driving rock that leaves you feeling like you've spent 30 minutes in the ring getting your arse handed to you by Stone Cold Steve Austin? Well, you may want to look elsewhere. Derya Nagle may provide the concussing riffs in prog-metal supergroup-of-sorts Good Tiger, but here in his bemasked solo guise, he's opted for some far more subtle moves. Opener Canim Benim is a slinky jazz workout that conjures images of lazy Sunday mornings, while Everyone Knows is filtered through dissociated synths and the memory of a previous night's euphoria. When he does crank up the energy for some nervy indie-rock this EP flies by, but the hooks that power them will blast out of your memory just as quickly. As a taster of Derya's eclectic tastes and ability to turn his hand to different styles, it does the job. But as a grandstanding statement, it's not going to win him any title belts. JAMES MACKINNON

ANY GIVEN DAY
OVERPOWER
(RAISING EMPIRE)

KKK½

FOR FANS OF: Caliban, Suicide Silence, Five Finger Death Punch

■ Any Given Day declare themselves to be *'living the American dream'* with this aptly-titled third album. True, they deal in a brand of slamming metalcore that's meatier than a triple-stack hamburger, packs all the gas-guzzling uncompromising attitude of a V8 Mustang, and undulates between raw-throated aggression and chest-thumping melody in ways that'll have 1,000 rock-radio stations hammering down their door. Honed across 2014 debut My Longest Way Home and 2016's Everlasting, it's impressively engineered stuff from this German quartet. The superb range of leather-lunged vocalist Dennis Diehl aside, though, they lack a spark that's truly their own. Yes, Lonewolf is the sort of machine-tooled anthem a million peers have reached for and failed, and they evoke the muscular pump of Five Finger Death Punch (Loveless) and irresistibly epic metal sweep of Howard Jones-era Killswitch Engage (Savior) at will. Even still, with bruising talents like theirs, AGD leave us begging to see them step outside the box. SAM LAW

THE BOUNCING SOULS
CRUCIAL MOMENTS
(RISE)

KKKK

FOR FANS OF: Bad Religion, Pennywise, Rancid

■ The Bouncing Souls have been a band for three decades now, a time during which they have earned themselves an enviable cult following and a reputation as one of the most respected punk rock outfits on the planet. To mark the big three zero, the New Brunswick quartet wanted to do something special to thank their fans. But you don't say thank you with a Greatest Hits collection, not if you *really* care. Enter Crucial Moments, a brand spanking new, six-song celebration that goes off like a punk rock party-popper. Take 1989, a short, sharp rager of a tune that was built for circle-pits. Meanwhile, the sticky nostalgia of Home is a heartfelt love letter to New Jersey, before Here's To Us serves up one of the biggest choruses the band have ever committed to record – and that really is saying something. A perfect blend of nostalgia and grit, Crucial Moments is a brilliant way to pay tribute to the blood, sweat and tears shared by the band and their fans over the past 30 years. And it's absolutely glorious. JOHN LONGBOTTOM

BLAQK AUDIO
ONLY THINGS WE LOVE
(BLAQK NOISE)

KKK½

FOR FANS OF: Nine Inch Nails, The Black Queen, AFI

■ AFI frontman Davey Havok and guitarist Jade Puget have never kept their fondness for '80s British music to themselves. Between Smiths shirts and nods to The Cure, the fingerprints of the decade are all over their band's dark punk romanticism. But with their main job clearly not enough of a vessel in which to house these tendencies, Blaqk Audio is what AFI would sound like if you took out all the Danzig spookiness and swapped it for the gutter-glitter of The Human League and Heaven 17. Its success lies in the fact that, aside from being good at this stuff and knowing their way around the electronic nuances involved, the core of the songwriting still has echoes of AFI to it, but if AFI were fed through New Order's Blue Monday. Thus, rather than being a massive, weird step into the unknown, Only Things We Love is actually an enjoyable, playful exercise in indulging its constituents' interests. Infinite Skin is a dreamy, keyboard-covered electro-pop workout, while The Viles takes a more anthemic turn, and Summer's Out Of Sight adds a guitar line that could have come straight from an '80s teen flick. It's a sideways step for this pair, then, but not so much a complete mutation as trying on a new, synth-tastic set of clothes. NICK RUSKELL

LIVES

KKKKK = CLASSIC KKKK = EXCELLENT KKK = GOOD KK = AVERAGE K = POOR

BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE

WHILE SHE SLEEPS
+ STRAY FROM THE PATH, TRASH BOAT, LANDMVRKS

CAMDEN ROUNDHOUSE, LONDON

01/03/2019

KKKKK

The Roundhouse quakes as Sheffield sluggers WHILE SHE SLEEPS triumph at SO WHAT? release show

While She Sleeps' new album, SO WHAT?, is out today. Tonight marks the final show of their 22-date European and UK headline tour, during which they're joined onstage by a choir. Oh yeah, and it's their biggest sold-out London show to date. If you want to see a band play like their lives depend on it, you've come to the right place.

But first it's time to "make some fucking noise," as ordered by Landmvrks frontman Florent Salfati, who guides his French metalcore crew through a set of barrelling riffs and ambient intervals. It's a fitting warm-up for what comes later, unlike Trash Boat, who are a welcome pop-punk curveball on this otherwise mercilessly heavy line-up. Still, that doesn't mean they don't have some crushing moments of their own. The gigantic roars in Old Soul light a fire under the crowd, while the chorus of Tring Quarry sees the band cut the music and let the room blast the words back in their face. It's headliner-worthy stuff, and we haven't even made it to Stray From The Path's incendiary set yet.

When they emerge, there are crowd-surfers, circle pits and carnage as the New York brawlers bring the full force of their riot

PHOTOS: THOMAS BROOKES

rock. First World Problem Child even sees Architects' frontman Sam Carter hit the stage to deliver his guest vocals in truly venomous style. However, as explosive as this is, Stray From The Path could've brought Elvis himself onstage and it still wouldn't steal the thunder from tonight's endgame.

"It's pretty fucking amazing watching a band like this come up," yells SFTP guitarist Tom Williams, teeing up While She Sleeps. And the man's got a very good point.

From the depths of industrial Yorkshire, to here, a sold-out Camden Roundhouse, wall-to-wall with fans chanting their name. Tonight is an arrival, not just for their new record but for While She Sleeps themselves. Frontman Loz Taylor's voice is like being sandblasted with pure northern grit. Contrast that with the ethereal choir and you've got yourself some seriously heavyweight vocal firepower.

The haunting intro of You Are We makes full use of the additional vocalists before giving way to absolute mayhem as the room shreds itself accordingly. Brainwashed, meanwhile, invokes a colossal circle pit, and Seven Hills sees Loz wading across the heads of fans.

"Fuck me, this is unbelievable!" gasps the frontman in disbelief at the madness unfolding in front of him. "This is insane," seconds guitarist Mat Welsh as they smash through song after song of bruising, barbed-wire-wrapped metalcore bangers.

The new album might only have dropped at midnight, but that doesn't stunt the room's reaction to new songs like the pounding HAUNT ME and thundering THE GUILTY PARTY, which are littered with those gnarly little guitar licks that punctuate the chaos and give the band their flavour. Older cut Four Walls, meanwhile, sees fans on each other's shoulders with their lighters in the sky, before an encore of Silence Speaks, Our Courage, Our Cancer and Hurricane brings a liquid mess of bodies over the barrier.

If While She Sleeps never played another note, this show would remain their definitive performance. It is a deafening reminder of the strength in brotherhood and friendship – a monument to hard graft and the importance of following your ambitions, not to mention treating your fans as one of the band. But this is only the beginning of something special. Next stops include America, All Points East, 2000trees – we could go on. By 2020 this show will be just another footnote in the band's journey. But tonight, it's a serious and deserved arrival. JOHN LONGBOTTOM

Loz had that one hair that was just a little longer than the rest

Q&A LOZ TAYLOR (VOCALS)

How was that for you?

"It was mind-blowing. When I was looking out at the crowd during the set, every single person in the audience was singing along. When you're a young, aspiring musician you only think about small crowds knowing your lyrics, but that was amazing. It felt extra special because the new record is out today, too. Honestly, it's really unbelievable, and we don't take any of this for granted."

How did you find playing with the choir?

"It's been so hectic. We didn't get a chance to practise with the choir until today because we've been away on tour, so they've been practising the songs without us. It was great, though. I was getting into the zone, then I turned around and realised there were a load of people behind me who can sing really well!"

Did you feel like the new songs got a good reception?

"Huge – they got a huge, huge reception, yeah. HAUNT ME's my favourite new one to play, and THE GUILTY PARTY is really cool, too, and people went mad for them. There are more and more new fans coming to our shows – we played here on the Kerrang! Tour in 2012 with New Found Glory, and Mat fell off the stage 'cause we were going so nuts – but to come and do our own show and have it sell out is mad. It's a huge milestone for us."

FACE IN THE CROWD

Is this you having a lovely time at While She Sleeps? Well, you've won a set list from the gig! Send a pic of your face and your ticket to Feedback@kerrang.com to claim your loot!

LIVES

INJECT THE VENOM

VEIN
+ HIGHER POWER, NARROW HEAD

GREEN DOOR STORE, BRIGHTON

22/02/2019

KKKKK

Boston hardcore crew VEIN bring their intense ruckus to Brighton

■ The Green Door Store has enjoyed eight years' worth of gigs, but it's never witnessed anything quite like a Vein show. Judging by the forlorn pleas for tickets filling social media, the rising Boston bruisers could have sold out a much larger venue, but there's an undeniable thrill in seeing them create absolute havoc at such close quarters. It is, in a word, complete and total pandemonium.

There's little of that with Narrow Head, whose warm and fuzzy grunge-gaze makes for a surprisingly sleepy opening. In stark contrast, Higher Power are an absolute force of nature tonight, with the liquid thrash of tunes like Can't Relate and Balance convincing with both infectious grooves and hardcore heft.

But even that cannot prepare anyone here for the utter carnage that Vein deliver. As the sonic A-bombs of last year's errorzone album are detonated, speaker stacks are scaled, members of both support bands jump onstage to sing and stage-dive, and a crazed crowd mirror vocalist Anthony DiDio's constantly kinetic presence. Imagine The Dillinger Escape Plan playing a gig in your garage and you've got some idea of the levels of intensity bouncing off these walls.

The chaotic noise the Bostonians make communicates the fractured fury of an age of panic, and while they're playing there really is no let-up; even wheezing industrial interlude anaesthesia becomes a rowdy yell-along. However, through all the roughness, the atmosphere is one of (admittedly very full-contact) celebration rather than disharmony. Vein have only been onstage for 35 minutes by the time virus://vibrance brings proceedings to a close, but nobody's left feeling short-changed. Encountering their merry hell in such intimate surroundings is an experience no-one will forget. OLLY THOMAS

"Mate, put your arm down! People behind you can't see!"

Hardcore peek-a-boo: intense stuff

PHOTOS: KAT WOOD

SAOR

+ SYLVAINE, WOLVENCROWN

ST LUKE'S, GLASGOW 01/03/2019

KKKK

Scottish folk-metallers unleash their songs of fire and ice

■ As bracing as freezing mountain burns, and ebbing with sporadic whisky warmth, the Highland spirits have poured down into Glasgow this evening. The grand, deconsecrated confines of St Luke's are abuzz for Saor's Forgotten Paths album launch, and if that beguiling fourth LP is an announcement of Scotland's ascendant folk-black-metallers on the world stage, tonight is a promise that they're ready to own it. Nottingham's Wolvencrown open with delightfully blackened bullishness, but it's Norwegian songstress Sylvaine who strikes the more fittingly triumphant tone. Dreamy blackgaze concoctions swirl and stagger like wraiths on a winter's night, but they're anchored by her almost elfin charm. Saor mainman Andy Marshall cuts a more imposing figure – his bearded scowl bristling like some urbane clansman – but backed by drilled metal and traditional instrumentalists, he delves even further into epic atmospherics. From Forgotten Paths' twisting title-track and the granite-hewn Monadh through older cuts like Aura, it's a tightly-woven tapestry of celebration and melancholy. Better still, accompanied by guest vocalist Sophie Roger for closer Bròn, they leave us with the defiant roar of Celtic giants on the rise. **SAM LAW**

GODSMACK

+ LIKE A STORM

02 FORUM KENTISH TOWN, LONDON 27/02/2019

KKKK

American grunge superstars make an understated return to London

■ It would be fair to say that the words 'Godsmack' and 'godlike' are rarely found together in the same sentence. However, at times the way they carry themselves tonight suggests they view themselves as the second coming of Christ. "Rise for me!" commands frontman Sully Erna, as the entire balcony obliges. As we shall see, however, they don't always walk on water, musically or as performers. Opening proceedings, New Zealanders Like A Storm fuse nu-metal riffs and beatdowns with relative ease, but fail to leave any lasting impression beyond the drone of their didgeridoos. The headliners' megamix intro is much like the wrestle-rock they've been peddling for the past two decades, borrowing heavily from the greats in quick flashes, but never being as satisfying as the actual Alice In Chains or Soundgarden. Nevertheless, this crowd remain gripped, until it all goes wrong. "I remember when a rock show used to look like a rock show," rants Sully, before complaining about the lack of female nudity. The blank stares force him to admit he's had "too much whisky". It's no excuse, and it sucks the air out of the room, leaving next song Under Your Scars to fall disastrously flat. The energy is back with an encore cover of AC/DC's Highway To Hell, but it's too late for Godsmack to claim they're any kind of deity. **AMIT SHARMA**

Mayday Parade would regret getting the cheap wig glue

MAYDAY PARADE / THE WONDER YEARS

+ MOVEMENTS, PRONOUN

TROXY, LONDON 23/02/2019

KKKK

A double-headed emotional punk extravaganza engulfs the capital

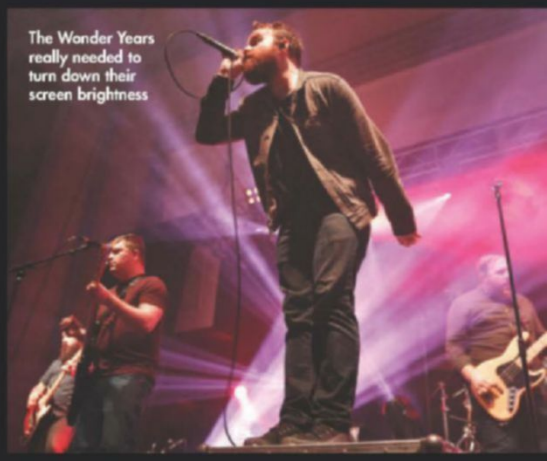
■ Over the past 15 years, Mayday Parade and The Wonder Years have both become unique, cult bands in their own ways. Tonight, something very special happens, as these two acts renowned for really pulling on the heartstrings of their followers join forces for a night of big choruses and high emotion. It's the stuff nostalgic, sad dreams are made of.

This tour also sees rather impressive openers Pronoun bring a cheerful twang of synth-pop-inspired emo early on. Movements quickly follow, getting the crowd moving, but their usual boisterous bounce seems to be somewhat lacking tonight.

However, if there's one thing you're guaranteed with The Wonder Years, it's a show that will see you end up as physically sweaty and emotionally drained as the band, as their tales of loneliness, grief and the questions that come with life's journey work their magic. "We are broken, we are beaten the fuck up, we are sick, but we will give you fucking everything," bellows vocalist Dan Campbell. But despite this clear fatigue, they still deliver new tracks like Sister Cities as if it was the first day of the tour, served with pin-point accuracy.

As Mayday Parade storm on to the stage, with frontman Derek Sanders arriving without any shoes and socks, they're met with utter adulation as the one-two of favourites Never Sure and Jersey kick things off with throat-ripping screams erupting from the crowd. "Are there any fans of emo music in here tonight?" the frontman asks at one point, as an acoustic guitar comes out for a medley of emo classics including My Chemical Romance's I'm Not Okay (I Promise). But whatever either are doing, tonight is a pure celebration of this music from two bands who continue to cover you in a big blanket of emotion with ease. **JAMES HINDLE**

PHOTOS: PAUL HARRIES

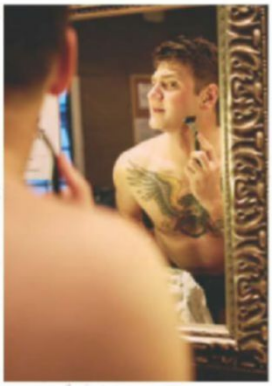


The Wonder Years really needed to turn down their screen brightness

GET IN THE VAN

BASEMENT

An insight into the high jinks of life on the road with the Tractor Boys of British rock…



PHOTOS: ED MASON

WHAT GOES ON TOUR...

Frontman ANDREW FISHER offers us a perch on a flight case...

Our favourite thing to watch on tour is... Shrek.

The one essential rider request is... Humous.

The first thing we do when we get to a venue is... Hit the humous.

Our dressing room music of choice is... None. Everyone please shut up!

The phrase you're likely to hear on repeat on tour is... *"Chicken mayo."*

The atmosphere just before we go onstage is like... Ipswich Town scoring in the 90th minute against those stinking Canaries.

The tour bus usually smells like... Coffee or peanut butter.

We pass our free time by... Complaining that we're bored.

The saddest thing about leaving tour to go home is... Wondering if we made the most of every opportunity.

GIG GUIDE

HAVANA CLUB

DEAF HAVANA might still be getting to grips with their new tracks, but don't expect much looking back on this week's UK tour...

Q&A JAMES VECK-GILODI (VOCALS/GUITARS)

Hey James! How does it feel to be touring your new album, Rituals, fully in the UK for the first time?
"It's a bit a weird because with the new songs, we haven't really made them sound as good as they can be live, as it's been difficult to replicate the sound – but I think it should be cool. In Europe, when we've been on tour it's been hit-or-miss, but I am looking forward to it, for sure!"

Have you been building your recent set lists more around the new album?
"We're trying to play as much of it as we can. We've all got keyboards now and I've got this weird little launchpad thing. It's been difficult, but I think we are almost there. We are getting there, at least!"

Your previous album, 2017's All These Countless Nights, was recorded live, but you decided not to follow suit with Rituals. Do you think that's made it harder?
"I wasn't really thinking about that at all at the time, which was kind of a mistake – when we recorded All These Countless Nights, we played everything live, so we already got that bit out of the way. But this time I had no idea how we were going to translate these songs to a live setting. And we are still kinda learning, to be honest."

Has the challenge of that helped freshen things up and given you some new obstacles to overcome onstage?
"Definitely. It's given me a bit more variety, too, as I don't play guitar in every song; it pushes me out of my comfort zone. Because previously my comfort zone would be me hiding behind a guitar, but on some of these songs I just sing. It can be quite intimidating – even now doing this for so long – but it has definitely been a really good experience."

> **"OUR DEBUT IS ONE OF THE WORST ALBUMS EVER MADE"**
> JAMES VECK-GILODI

You've just been announced to headline 2000trees Festival – are you looking forward to that challenge?
"It's a really cool festival. I think the line-up is always cool and they have this wicked little acoustic stage in the forest, which is always fun. I think we are going to try to do something cool for it, but we are definitely going to play a mix of old and new songs when we play. It should be good – we always have such a good time there."

A lot of bands increasingly seem to be doing 10-year anniversary celebrations of albums – can we expect the same with your debut, Meet Me Halfway, At Least?
"Do you know what? That is one of the worst albums that anyone has ever made, so we will definitely not be playing any songs from that (*laughs*)."

Oh. What's planned for the rest of the year, then?
"This tour is really long, we've still got a couple of weeks left, which is mental, as I'll probably die before we even get to the end, so we're probably going to be doing nothing. Nah, I'm joking. I think we're going to do some stuff in America, then we've got a couple of festivals in other countries and we're trying to get out to Asia. It's pretty busy, which is good, otherwise I get really bored (*laughs*)."

DATES

CARDIFF Great Hall March 15, **PORTSMOUTH** Pyramids O2 Academy 16, **BRISTOL** O2 Academy 17, **NOTTINGHAM** Rock City 19, **HULL** Welly 20, **GLASGOW** SWG3 21, **ABERDEEN** Unit 51 22, **MIDDLESBROUGH** Empire 24, **MANCHESTER** Albert Hall 25, **SHEFFIELD** Leadmill 27, **BIRMINGHAM** O2 Academy 28, **BELFAST** Limelight 30, **DUBLIN** Green Room 31. Support: The Lafontaines, Hot Milk.

WORDS: JAMES HINGLE PHOTO: PAUL HARRIES

NOW BOOKING

☆ = JUST ANNOUNCED

2000TREES FESTIVAL Line-up: You Me At Six, Every Time I Die, While She Sleeps, Frank Iero And The Future Violents, Therapy?, Comeback Kid, Jamie Lenman, Hands Like Houses, Single Mothers, Cavetown, Estrons, Martha, Milk Teeth, Puppy, Muncie Girls, GroundCulture, Higher Power, Loathe, Gouge Away, Nervus, Heavy Lungs, MØL, Indigo La, LICE, The Drew Thompson Foundation, Spielbergs, Sunshine Frisbee Laserbeam, Imperial Leisure, Orchards, Frauds, Phaxjaw, Indoor Pets, False Advertising, Frank Turner & The Sleeping Souls, Mängäl Hörde, Skinny Lister, Rolo Tomassi, Grace Petrie, WSTR, LIFE, Petrol Girls, The St Pierre Snake Invasion, Jim Lockey & The Solemn Sun, Crazy Arm, Seán McGowan, Oxygen Thief, Johnny Lloyd, Brand New Friend, Deux Furieuses, Deaf Havana, Flogging Molly, Drug Church, Turnstile, Conjurer, Can't Swim, The Black Queen, Wicca Phase Springs Eternal, Get Cape. Wear Cape. Fly, Angel DuSt, Dream State, The Number Twelve Looks Like You, Blood Youth, Palm Reader, Holding Absence, Press to MECO, Normandie, Allusinlove, Haggard Cat, Cold Years, West Thebarton, Holiday Oscar, A.A.Williams, Saur, PENGSHUI, JOHN, italdy-oatwouldeatyou, Delaire, the Liar, Solli, Floorboards, All Ears Arrow. Cheltenham Upcote Farm July 11–13.

ALEXISONFIRE London Alexandra Palace June 1.

ALICE COOPER Manchester Arena October 4, Aberdeen Event Complex 5, Leeds First Direct Arena 7, Brighton Centre 8, London O2 Arena 10, Birmingham Resorts World Arena 11, Cardiff Motorpoint Arena 1. Support: The Stranglers, MC50.

ALICE IN CHAINS Glasgow Braehead Arena May 25, Birmingham Barclaycard Arena 24, London SSE Arena Wembley 25. Support: Black Rebel Motorcycle Club.

ALL POINTS EAST Line-up: Bring Me The Horizon, Idles, Nothing But Thieves, Run The Jewels, Scarlxrd, Architects, While She Sleeps, Employed To Serve, Alice Glass. London Victoria Park May 31.

AMON AMARTH / BEHEMOTH Limerick King John's Castle June 17.

AMPLIFIED FESTIVAL Line-up: Mushroomhead, Esprit D'Air, Bloodshot Dawn, Lawnmower Deth, TRC, Krysthia, Ugly Kid Joe. Gloucestershire Quarrydowns. July 19 – 21.

ARCTANGENT FESTIVAL Line-up: Meshuggah, Battles, Cult Of Luna, Carpenter Brut, Polyphia, Zeal & Ardor, 65daysofstatic, The Black Queen, Daughters, Caspian, The Contortionist, Three Trapped Tigers, The Algorithm, Frontierer, Conjurer, Bossk Ithaca, The Ocean, Nordic Giants, Sleep Token and more. Fernhill Farm Bristol August 15 – 17.

AS IT IS Leicester O2 Academy2 March 14, Brighton Concorde 2 15. Support: Modern Error.

BADFLOWER London Tufnell Park Dome April 8.

BATTLE BEAST London Tufnell Park Dome April 30.

BIKINI KILL London O2 Brixton Academy June 10 – 11.

☆ **BILLY CORGAN** Glasgow Saint Luke's June 17, Dublin Olympia Theatre 19.

☆ **BLACK FLAG** London Electric Ballroom October 7, Birmingham The Mill 8, Norwich Waterfront 9, Southampton Engine Rooms 11, Cardiff Tramshed 12, Manchester Academy 2 13.

BLOODSTOCK FESTIVAL Line-up: Parkway Drive, Scorpions, Sabaton, Children Of Bodom, Cradle Of Filth, Dee Snider, Hypocrisy, Soilwork, Queensryche, Code Orange, Anthrax, Tesseract, Dimmu Borgir, Thy Art Is Murder, Cancer Bats, Raging Speedhorn, SHVPES and more. Catton Park Derby August 8 – 11.

BOB MOULD London Electric Ballroom March 14, Leeds Brudenell Social Club 15, Edinburgh Liquid Rooms 16, Manchester Academy 2 17.

BON JOVI Liverpool Anfield Stadium June 19, London Wembley Stadium 21, Coventry Ricoh Arena 23. Support: Manic Street Preachers.

BOOM TOWN FESTIVAL Line-up: Prophets Of Rage, Pennywise, Killing Joke, Napalm Death, Atari Teenage Riot, Godflesh, At The Gates, Therapy?, Leftover Crack, Crossfaith, Cancer Bats, Black Peaks, Loathe, Ithaca. Various venues, Winchester August 7–11.

BOUNCING SOULS Bristol Fleece October 22, Glasgow St Lukes 24, Manchester Gorilla 25, London Camden Electric Ballroom 26.

BURY TOMORROW Portsmouth Pyramids Centre December 13, Nottingham Rock City 14, Cardiff Y Plas 15, Newcastle Riverside 17, Glasgow SWG3 18, Manchester Academy 20, London Camden Roundhouse 21.

CAMDEN ROCKS FESTIVAL Line-up: Frank Turner, Deaf Havana, Ash, Ginger Wildheart, Milk Teeth, SHVPES, Raging Speedhorn, New Model Army, Lotus Eater, Loathe, Our Hollow Our Home, Wheatus and more. Camden London & multiple venues June 1–2.

CAN'T SWIM Leeds Key Club May 2, Glasgow Garage 3, Newcastle Think Tank 4, Manchester Star And Garter 6, London Borderline 7, Birmingham Asylum 8, Nottingham Bodega Social Club 9, Bristol Thekla 10.

CAVE IN London Camden Electric Ballroom April 12.

☆ **CHAPTER & VERSE** Tunbridge Wells Sussex Arms May 14, London Thousand Island 16, Huddersfield Parish 17, Manchester Night People 19, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 20, Birmingham Sunflower Lounge 22, Bristol Hy Brasil 23, Plymouth Underground 24. Support: Delaire, The Liar.

CHRIS SHIFLETT Dublin Grand Social March 30, Brighton Haunt 31, London Omeara April 1, Bristol Fleece 2, Manchester Night & Day 4, Glasgow Classic Grand 5, Edinburgh La Belle Angle 6.

☆ **CONVERGE** London Camden Electric Ballroom July 1, Manchester O2 Ritz 2. Support: Terror, Sect, Candy.

CULT LEADER London Camden Underworld June 24, Birmingham Hare & Hounds 25, Glasgow Audio 26, Leeds Temple Of Boom 27, Manchester Rebellion 28, Bournemouth Anvil 29. Support: Birds In A Row.

DESERTFEST Line-up: All Them Witches, Kadavar, Witch, Earthless, Colour Haze, We Hunt Buffalo, OM, Wovenhand, Wiegedood, HHY & The Macumbas, Jaye Jayle, Stoned Jesus, Mondo Generator, Naxatras, The Devil And The Almighty Blues, Sabbath Assembly, Elephant Tree, MESSA, High Fighter, Great Electric Quest, Salem's Bend, HIGH REEPER. London Camden & various venues May 3 – 5.

DEAF HAVANA Cardiff Great Hall March 15, Portsmouth Pyramids 16, O2 Academy Bristol 17, Nottingham Rock City 19, Hull Welly 20, Glasgow SWG3 21, Aberdeen Unit 51 22, Middlesbrough Empire 24, Manchester Albert Hall 25, Sheffield Leadmill 27, O2 Academy Birmingham 28, Belfast Limelight 30, Dublin Green Room 31.

DEATH BLOOMS London Camden Black Heart May 8, Manchester Star & Garter 9, Birmingham Victoria 12.

DEVIN TOWNSEND London Bush Hall April 24–25, Bristol St George's 26, Leeds City Varieties Music Hall 27, Edinburgh The Jam House 29, Birmingham The Glee Club 30.

DISTURBED London Alexandra Palace May 11, O2 Academy Glasgow 13, O2 Apollo Manchester 14.

DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL Line-up: Slipknot, Tool, Def Leppard, Slash feat Myles Kennedy & The Conspirators, Rob Zombie, Underoath, Deluin, Skindred, Power Trip, Me First And The Gimme Gimmes, Reel Big Fish, Amon Amarth, The Amity Affliction, Carcass, Opeth, Trivium, Whitesnake, Tesla, Smashing Pumpkins, Slayer, Lamb Of God, Anthrax, State Champs, Blackberry Smoke, I Prevail, Eagles Of Death Metal, Badflower, Black Futures, Zebrahead, MAN WITH A MISSION, nothing,nowhere., Our Last Night, Jinjer, Riding The Low, Alien Weaponry, Underside, Dream Theater, Whitechapel, Yours Truly, Enter Shikari, Aaron Buchanan, Alcest, Animals As Leaders, At The Gates, Bad Wolves, Batushka, Beartooth, Behemoth, Black Peaks, Brothers Osborne, Cane Hill, Clutch, Coldrain, Conjurer, Crystal Lake, Deadland Ritual, Fever 333, Godsmack, GroundCulture, Halestorm, Heart Of A Coward, Icon For Hire, Intervals, Lost In Line, Like A Storm, Lost In Stereo, Love Bites, Municipal Waste, Ne Obliviscaris, Palaye Royale, Parting Gift, Redhook, Skid Row, Skynd, Stone Temple Pilots, Sumo Cyco, Those Damn Crows, Three Days Grace, Taska, Trash Boat, Twelve Foot Ninja, Vega, Wolf Jaw, Dinosaur Pile-up, Kvelertak, The Wonder Years, Simple Creatures, Hot Milk, Last Society, Queen Zee, Nova Twins, Vambo, Allusinlove, Graveyard, ROAM, The Hu, Cloud, Kim Jennett. Donington Park June 14 – 16.

DREAM STATE Bristol Exchange March 23, Exeter Cavern 24, Plymouth Junction 26, Southampton Joiners 27, Reading Face Bar 28, Tunbridge Wells Forum 29, Guildford Boileroom April 1, Oxford Bullingdon 2, Peterborough Met Lounge 3, Birmingham Flapper 4, Blackpool Bootleg Social 6, Manchester Deaf Institute 7, Glasgow King Tuts 8, Aberdeen Krakatoa 10, Edinburgh Sneaky Petes 11, Newcastle Think Tank 12, Leeds Key Club 14, Hull Welly 15, Nottingham Rock City Basement 16, London Camden Underworld 17, Norwich Waterfront Studio 19, Milton Keynes Craufurd Arms 20, Brighton Hope & Ruin 21, Cardiff Clwb Ifor Bach 22.

ELECTRIC WIZARD London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire, October 17.

EMPLOYED TO SERVE Manchester Rebellion March 29, London Garage May 10, Glasgow Classic Grand Lounge 11.

☆ **FEED THE RHINO** London Camden Underworld May 17.

FIT FOR AN AUTOPSY Birmingham Mama Roux's May 29, Bristol Exchange 30, London Camden Underworld 31, Leeds Key Club June 1, Manchester Rebellion 2. Support: Venom Prison.

GLAMOUR OF THE KILL Manchester Rebellion April 2, Glasgow Stereo 3, London O2 Academy Islington 4, Birmingham O2 Institute3 5, Bristol Exchange 6, Leeds Key Club 7.

GOJIRA O2 Academy Birmingham June 29, London O2 Academy Brixton 30, Manchester O2 Apollo July 1.

GRETA VAN FLEET Leeds O2 Academy November 3, Dublin Olympia Theatre 4, Glasgow O2 Academy 6, Newcastle O2 Academy 7, Liverpool Mountford Hall 9, Nottingham Rock City 10.

HALESTORM Glasgow Hydro Arena November 24, Nottingham Motorpoint Arena 25, Cardiff Motorpoint Arena 27, London Alexandra Palace 28. Support: In This Moment, New Years Day.

HOLDING ABSENCE Southampton Joiners March 21, Birmingham The Flapper 22, Leeds The Key Club 23, Hull O'Riley's 24, Glasgow The Garage 25, Manchester Rebellion Club 27, Cardiff The Globe 28, London The Underworld 29.

HOLLYWOOD UNDEAD London O2 Academy Brixton April 23, O2 Academy Bristol 24, O2 Academy Bournemouth 25, Liverpool University 27, O2 Academy Leeds 28, O2 Academy Newcastle 30, O2 Academy Sheffield May 1, Nottingham Rock City 3, Cardiff Great Hall 4.

IDLES Sheffield Leadmill March 26, Cardiff Tramshed 27, Norwich Nick Rayns LCR 28, Brighton Dome 29, Belfast Empire Music Hall April 1, Dublin Vicar Street 2, Manchester Albert Hall 3, London Camden Electric Ballroom 4 – 6. Support: Crows (March 26 - April 4), Life (April 5 only), The Murder Capital (March 26 only).

IN FLAMES Glasgow SWG3 April 3 , Manchester O2 Ritz 4, London Roundhouse 5, Nottingham Rock City 6, Bristol SWX 7, Norwich UEA 9.

ISLE OF WIGHT FESTIVAL Line-up: Biffy Clyro, IDLES. Seaclose Park, Newport June 13 – 16.

JAWBREAKER London O2 Academy Brixton April 27.

JOYCE MANOR Manchester Academy 3 April 13, Newcastle Institute 2 14, Glasgow King Tuts 15, Leeds Key Club 16, Birmingham Mama Roux 18, London Islington Assembly Hall 19, Southampton Joiners 20, Bristol Thekla 21.

KISS Birmingham Arena July 9, London O2 Arena 11, Manchester Arena 12, Newcastle Metro Radio Arena 14, Glasgow SSE Hydro Arena 16.

LACUNA COIL Manchester O2 Ritz November 12, Glasgow Garage 13, Bristol SWX 15, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 16, Nottingham Rock City 17. Support: Eluveitie, Infected Rain.

LOWER THAN ATLANTIS Manchester Academy May 9, Birmingham O2 Academy 10, London O2 Academy Brixton 11.

READING & LEEDS FESTIVAL

Latest additions: Basement, Black Honey, Blood Youth, Boston Manor, Counterfeit, The Faim, FIDLAR, Higher Power, Hot Milk, Machine Gun Kelly, Mayday Parade, Milk Teeth, Of Mice & Men, Patent Pending, Press Club, PUP, Puppy, Stand Atlantic, SWMRS.

MAMMOTH WEED WIZARD BASTARD Manchester Rebellion, May 18. Support: Witchsorrow, Kurokuma, Mastiff, Tides Of Sulfur, The Grand Mal, Goblinsmoker.

METALLICA Manchester Etihad Stadium June 18, London Twickenham Stadium 20. Support: Ghost, Bokassa.

MIDNIGHT London Tufnell Park Dome, April 12. Support: Hellripper, Exxxecutioner, Aggressive Perfector.

MUSE London Stadium June 1, Manchester Etihad Stadium 8.

NAPOLEON Bristol Louisiana March 14, Birmingham Asylum 2 15, Newcastle Head Of Steam 16, Nottingham Alberts 17, Glasgow Classic Grand 18, Manchester Star & Garter 19, Bournemouth Anvil 20, London Boston Music Room 31.

NORMANDIE Manchester Deaf Institute March 24, Glasgow Stereo 25, Birmingham Mama Roux's 26, London Dingwalls 27.

OUTBREAK FESTIVAL Line-up: Comeback Kid, Citizen, Jesus Piece, Cold World, Defector, Backtrack, Such Gold, King Nine, Candy. Canal Mills, Leeds April 28.

OVERKILL London O2 Academy Islington March 21, O2 Academy Dublin 23, Glasgow SWG3 24. Support: Destruction, Flotsam And Jetsam, Mesh.oak.

PANIC! AT THE DISCO Glasgow SSE Hydro March 24, Cardiff Motorpoint Arena 25, Birmingham Arena 26, London The O2 28 – 29, Manchester Arena 30.

PAPA ROACH Southampton O2 Guildhall April 13, Exeter Great Hall 14, O2 Academy Bristol 15, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 17 - 18, Manchester Academy 20, O2 Academy Leeds 21, O2 Academy Newcastle 23, Edinburgh Usher Hall 24, Aberdeen Music Hall 25, Norwich UEA 27, Nottingham Rock City 28, O2 Academy Birmingham 29. Support: Nothing More, A (18th only), Hot Milk (17th only).

☆ **PHILIP H. ANSELMO & THE ILLEGALS** London Camden Underworld June 25, Manchester Gorilla 26, Bristol Fleece 27, Birmingham The Mill 28, London Camden Underworld 29.

PRESS CLUB Cheltenham Frog & Fiddle April 16, Bristol Hy Brasil 17, Newcastle Think Tank Underground 18, Edinburgh Sneaky Pete's 19, London The Islington May 2, Birmingham Dark Horse 3, Liverpool Sound City 4, Glasgow Stag & Dagger 5, Cardiff Clwb Ifor Bach 8.

PUP Bristol The Fleece April 9, London The Garage 10, Leeds Community Room at Brudenell Social Club 11, Glasgow Cathouse 12. Support: Milk Teeth.

PUPPY Southampton The Joiners April 17, Bristol Exchange 18, Birmingham Flapper 19, Manchester Star & Garter 20, Glasgow Garage Attic 21, Newcastle Think Tank? 22, Nottingham Bodega Social Club 23, Leeds Brudenell Social Club 24, London Camden Underworld 25. Support: Green Lung.

RADAR FESTIVAL Line-up: Animals As Leaders, Monuments, Rolo Tomassi, Toska, Vola, Car Bomb, No Consequence, Sithu Aye, Harbinger, Valias Ablaze, Eschar, Mask Of Judas, Visionist. Corner House, Guildford August 2 – 3.

RAMBLIN' MAN FAIR Line-up: Foreigner, The Darkness, Anathema, Beth Hart, Riverside, Pain Of Salvation. Maidstone Mote Park July 19 – 21.

RAMMSTEIN Milton Keynes Stadium MK, July 6.

THE RASMUS Manchester O2 Ritz October 7, Glasgow Galvanizers 8, Nottingham Rock City 10, O2 Academy Bristol 11, London O2 Forum 12.

THE RAVEN AGE Bristol Fleece March 20, Manchester Rebellion 21, Newcastle Think Tank 23, Glasgow Attic 24, Leeds Key Club 26, Stoke Sugarmill 27, London Underworld 28, Southampton Joiners 29. Support: Defences.

READING & LEEDS FESTIVAL Line-up: Foo Fighters, twenty one pilots, The Distillers, Bowling For Soup, Yungblud, PVRIS, A Day To Remember, Against The Current, The Amazons, Enter Shikari, Frank Carter And The Rattlesnakes, The Maine, Nothing,Nowhere, Royal Blood, The Story So Far, Twin Atlantic, You Me At Six and more. Richfield Avenue Reading & Bramham Park Leeds August 23 – 25.

REBELLION FESTIVAL Line-up: The Descendents, The Damned, The Stranglers, Cock Sparrer, The Skids, H.R. from Bad Brains, The Dwarves, Poison Idea, Pizza Tramp etc. Blackpool Winter Gardens August 1 – 4.

SACRED REICH London Camden Underworld November 27, Newcastle University 29, Glasgow Classic Grand 30, Belfast Limelight 2 December 1, Dublin Voodoo Lounge 3, Wolverhampton KK's Steel Mill 4.

SAXON Glasgow Braehead Arena October 18, London Hammersmith Eventim Apollo 19, Manchester O2 Apollo 20. Support: Krakus (Manchester and London only), Girlschool, Diamond Head (Manchester and London only), Black Star Riders (Glasgow only).

SET IT OFF Dublin Workmans Club April 10, Glasgow G2 12, Leeds Key Club 13, Newcastle Academy2 14, Manchester Academy3 16, Birmingham O2 Institute2 17, London Garage 18. Support: Vukovi, Bearings.

SKUNK ANANSIE London O2 Academy Brixton August 17, Manchester Academy 18, O2 Academy Bristol 19.

SKYHARBOR Manchester Satan's Hollow April 21, Nottingham Bodega 22, London Camden Underworld 23.

SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL Line-up: All Time Low, New Found Glory, Waterparks, NOFX, Gallows, The Story Of The Year, Bullet For My Valentine, Glassjaw, Simple Plan, The Menzingers, IDKHow, Turnstile, Knocked Loose, The Get Up Kids, Saves The Day, Trophy Eyes, Bad Religion, Less Than Jake, Lagwagon, Millencolin, The Interrupters, Anti-Flag, The Bombpops, The Bronx, Cancer Bats, Angel DuSt, WSTR, Real Friends, Seaway, Milk Teeth, Pagan, The Word Alive, Atreyu. Plain White T's, Hellogoodbye, Lights, Tigers Jaw, Touche Amore, Microwave, Wallflower, Employed To Serve, Our Hollow Our Home, Wage War, Neck Deep, As It Is, Boston Manor, A Loss For Words, grandson, Press To MECO, Story Untold, Between You & Me, The Plot In You, SHVPES, Kublai Khan, Cruel Hand, Justin Pierre (Motion City Soundtrack), Rob Lynch, Liam Cromby (We Are The Ocean), Chas Palmer Williams (Lightyear), Lizzy Farrall. Leeds Temple Newsam Estate May 25, Hatfield Park 26.

STAND ATLANTIC Leeds Key Club March 29, Manchester Night People 30, Newcastle Think Tank? 31, Glasgow King Tuts April 1, Nottingham Bodega 2, Birmingham Asylum 2 3, London Camden Underworld 4, Southampton Joiners 6, Bristol Exchange 7. Support: In Her Own Words, Shaded.

☆ **STONE TEMPLE PILOTS** O2 Academy Glasgow June 12, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 13.

SVALBARD Bristol Exchange March 15, London Boston Music Room 16.

SWMRS Manchester Academy2 March 13, Bristol Thekla 14, Kingston Fighting Cocks 15, London Electric Ballroom 16.

TAKING BACK SUNDAY Birmingham O2 Institute June 13, Glasgow Barrowlands 14, Belfast Limelight 15, Dublin Vicar Street 16, London Troxy 18, Manchester Academy 19, Bristol O2 Academy 20.

TECH FEST Line-up: Dying Fetus, Monuments, Psycroptic, Jon Gomm, Revocation, Archspire, Black Tongue, Polaris, Black Crown Initiate, A Night In Texas, Sarah,Palm Reader and more. Newark Showground Newark, July 4 – 7.

TENACIOUS D London SSE Arena Wembley June 1 – 2.

☆ **TRASH BOAT** Birmingham O2 Institute2 September 12, London O2 Islington Academy 13, Leeds Stylus 14, Glasgow G2 15, Belfast Ov Yeah Centre 17, Dublin Workmans Club 18. Support: Capstan, Dollskin, Woes.

TROPHY EYES London The Borderline May 27.

TUSKAR London The Birds Nest March 15, Sheffield Mulberry Bar And Venue 29, Manchester Star And Garter April 25, Nottingham The Chameleon April 26, London The Black Heart 27, Bristol The Old England 28.

VUKOVI Tunbridge Wells Forum May 1, Norwich Waterfront Studio 2, Guildford Boileroom 3, Cheltenham Frog And Fiddle 5, Southampton Joiners 7, Derby The Venue 8, Stoke Sugarmill 10, Edinburgh Mash House 15, Dundee Conroys Basement 16, Aberdeen Tunnels 17, London Camden Underworld June 4. Support: Superlove.

WEEZER London O2 Academy Brixton June 29.

THE WHO London Wembley Stadium July 6. Support: Eddie Vedder, Kaiser Chiefs.

THE XCERTS Dundee Beat Generator March 29, Glasgow SWG3 30, Leeds Key Club 31, Cambridge Portland Arms April 8, London The Garage 9, Birmingham Castle And Falcon 11, Southampton The Loft 12, Brighton Concorde 2 13, Bristol The Fleece 14.

YONAKA Birmingham Castle & Falcon March 15, Nottingham Bodega 16, Bristol The Fleece 17, Manchester Deaf Institute 19, Tunbridge Wells The Forum 21, Glasgow The Cathouse May 27, Sheffield The Plug 28, London Heaven 30, Cambridge Portland Arms June 3, Norwich Arts Centre 4, Leeds The Wardrobe 5, Stoke Sugarmill 6, Hove The Old Market 7.

ZZ TOP London SSE Arena, Wembley July 12. Support: Jimmy Barnes.

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Texas congressman **Beto O'Rourke** takes chance to deliver manifesto in quiet bit of **Metallica** concert

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